

The Catholic Biblical Quarterly



Volume VI, Number 2

April, 1944

Published by

THE CATHOLIC BIBLICAL ASSOCIATION OF AMERICA
WASHINGTON 17, D. C.

CONTENTS

The Gospel for Easter Monday	131
<i>Rev. Richard T. Murphy, O.P., S.T.D., S.S.Prolyta.</i>	
The Canticle of Canticles	142
<i>Rev. Paschal P. Parente, Ph.D., S.T.D.</i>	
Form-Critics, the Gospels, and St. Paul	159
<i>Rev. Stephen E. Donlon, S.J., S.T.D.</i>	
The Conversion of St. Paul	180
<i>Rev. Joseph L. Lilly, C.M., S.T.D., S.S.L.</i>	
"Give Place to the Wrath"	205
<i>Rev. Edgar R. Smothers, S.J., Ph.D.</i>	
Christ's Resurrection and the Dying and Rising Gods	216
<i>Rev. George C. Ring, S.J., S.T.D.</i>	
Correspondence	230
Biblical News	236
Survey of Periodicals	239
<i>Rev. John J. Collins, S.J., S.S.L.</i>	
<i>Rev. Anthony Cotter, S.J., S.T.D.</i>	
Book Reviews	244
<i>The Social Message of Jesus, Igino Giordano. RICHARD T. MURPHY, O.P.</i>	
<i>Companion to Scripture Studies, Vol. III, John E. Steinmueller. WILLIAM M. O'BEIRNE, O.P.</i>	
<i>From Jesus to Paul, Joseph Klausner. DONAT POULET, O.M.I. ..</i>	
<i>Introduction to Hurrian, E. A. Speiser. LOUIS HARTMAN, C.Ss.R. 252</i>	
<i>The Loves and Wars of Baal and Other Poems of Ugarit, Cyrus H. Gordon. PATRICK W. SKEHAN</i>	
<i>The Arabic Commentary of Yefet ben 'Ali Karaite on the Book of Hosea, Philip Birnbaum. PATRICK W. SKEHAN</i>	

THE GOSPEL FOR EASTER MONDAY

THE STORY OF EMMAUS (Lk. 24:13-25)

REV. RICHARD T. MURPHY, O.P., S.S.L.

None of the evangelists relates the actual story of Christ's resurrection from the dead, how the torn body suddenly became whole, glowed with life, and passed from the rocky tomb without disturbing the stone set at the mouth of the sepulchre. All of the evangelists, however, tell of the empty tomb, and relate the fact that Christ was seen alive by his apostles and disciples. No mention of a visit to his Blessed Mother is made in the gospel account, but Christian tradition has always held that our Lord appeared to her first of all. Record has been kept, however, of the apparitions to others on the first Easter Sunday: one to Mary Magdalen (Jn. 20:11-18), one to the other women (Mt. 28:9-10), one to St. Peter (1 Cor. 15:5), one to two disciples on the road to Emmaus (Lk. 25:13-35), and one to the "Eleven" (Lk. 24:36-43; Jn. 20:19-23)—in all, five appearances.

The following pages contain a brief exposition of the charming story of Christ's appearance to the two disciples on the road to Emmaus. It is contained only in the Gospel according to St. Luke (Mark summarizes it in one verse, 16:12), and is simply but accurately told by the evangelist who also recorded the mission of the seventy-two disciples. The story is told without any striving for effect; it is told by an educated believer who both in his Gospel and in the Acts never failed to point out the reasons for the great joy that pervaded the early Church.

The story falls conveniently into a fourfold division:

- (1) Introduction: 13-14. Difficulties: 60 or 160 stadia? Emmaus?
- (2) Meeting with Christ: 15-27. Difficulties: Cleophas? The other disciple?
- (3) Recognition: 28-32. Difficulty: Did they receive the Eucharist?
- (4) Return to Jerusalem: 33-35.

I. INTRODUCTION: 13-14

And behold, two of them were going that very day to a village named Emmaus which is sixty stadia from Jerusalem. And they were talking to each other about all these things that had happened.

And behold gives a decidedly Hebraic tone to this Palestinian episode, narrated with such wealth of concrete detail that St.

Luke must have learned of it from *two of the disciples* who formed a part of "the rest" mentioned in 24:9. These two had left Jerusalem *that very day* on which the empty tomb was first reported, a detail which is going to make this day tremendously important. They were both low in spirit, disheartened, as they set out for their home, a small village (κώμη) named *Emmaus*, some twenty miles away.

Emmaus has not yet been identified in such a way as to make further discussion either impossible or unreasonable. The reason for this is the state of the manuscripts, the majority of which place Emmaus sixty stadia from Jerusalem, while only six uncials, including the excellent Sinaiticus and Koridethi, locate it one hundred and sixty stadia from Jerusalem. Roughly speaking, this would make a distance of eight miles in one case, and twenty in the other.¹

At el-Qoubeibeh, seventy-five stadia (a trifle over nine miles) distant from Jerusalem, the Franciscans have erected a very attractive church and convent. One day when we were paying our respects to the good Fathers there, P. Benoit, with an unmistakable twinkle in his eye, called our attention to the inscription over the front of the church. It read: *Ecce duo discipuli ibant in castellum nomine Emmaus*. "Observe," he said, "that by reading straight across, that is, omitting that part of the text which follows the arch, one obtains the startling bit of information: *Ecce duo . . . Emmaus!*" As a matter of fact, there are three sites which have been proposed as the gospel Emmaus: el-Qoubeibeh, Qolonieh, and Amwas. The first mentioned site can boast of no ancient tradition in its favor, and, besides, is lacking in any nominal similarity with Emmaus.² The second site, Qolonieh, is of all the sites the least probable. It was peopled with eight hundred of Titus' veteran soldiers after the campaign which led to the taking of Jerusalem in 70 A.D., but no early tradition ever honored it with the name of Emmaus, and, furthermore, it is only thirty stadia (about four miles) from the Holy City. The third site which might be Emmaus is modern Amwas, bordering the main road about eighteen miles due west of Jerusalem. It was called "Emmaus in the plain country" by the

¹ Cf. M. J. Lagrange, *S. Luc.* p. 617 ff. for a close, detailed study of the various texts. P. Abel, "La distance de Jerusalem a Emmaus," RB 1925, pp. 347-367. A. de Guglielmo, "Emmaus," CBQ 1941, pp. 292-301.

² P. Vincent, "Les monuments de Quobeibeh," RB 1930, pp. 57-91.

Machabees, who there in 166 B.C. routed Nicanor and Gorgias, generals of Antiochus IV (1 Mach. 3:40; 4:3ff.). The V Macedonian legion was quartered there for two years before taking part in the siege of Jerusalem. In the third century Emmaus was elevated to the rank of city and was officially known as Nicopolis. During the building campaign launched at this period, the foundations of the basilica of Emmaus were laid, indicating that the local clergy (including Eusebius of Caesarea, Jerome, and Hesychius of Jerusalem) looked upon Amwas-Nicopolis as the Emmaus of the gospel. However, the basilica suffered the inevitable fate of all Christian churches at the hands of the Moslems, and the restorations effected from time to time were undone by those savage recurrences of destruction which are so familiar a part of Palestinian history. At present, a lovely convent of the Fathers of Betharram overlooks the ruins of the ancient church.³

The chief argument raised against the identification of this Emmaus with that of the Gospel is the fact that the disciples were able to retrace their steps from it to Jerusalem late that same day; and indeed forty miles is a long walk. However, as P. Abel remarks, "This feat has been performed by many in our own times."⁴ P. Lagrange with his usual good sense suggests that the two disciples—now thoroughly aroused and exultant over what they had learned—returned to Jerusalem, not on foot, but on the speediest horses available.⁵ One last point to be noticed is that Amwas is only one hundred and forty-four stadia from Jerusalem (eighteen miles), and to this extent it does not correspond to the texts which speak of either sixty or one hundred and sixty stadia. The problem therefore is not yet solved.⁶

The disciples were talking to each other about all these things that had happened (v. 14). Ὁμιλέω, used only by St. Luke in the New Testament, is here in the imperfect, indicating that the discussion of the disciples was carried on for some time. They had

³ Abel, *Géographie de la Palestine* (Paris: Gabalda, 1938) II, pp. 314-315; Vincent-Abel, *Emmaus* (Paris: Leroux, 1932); Pirot, "Emmaus," *Dict. Bibl. Suppl.* II, 1049-1062; Vincent, *Authenticité des lieux saints* (Paris: Gabalda, 1932), pp. 106-108.

⁴ RB, 1925, p. 366.

⁵ *Op. cit.*, p. 611.

⁶ M. J. Lagrange, *The Gospel of Jesus Christ* (London: Burnes & Oates, 1938) II, pp. 289 f, note.

much to discuss. They had left the city knowing of the empty tomb, but before Peter and John had verified the reports of the women; nor had they heard the story of Mary Magdalen, whose grief had been changed into transports of joy when she recognized the Master, mistaken at first for the gardener (Jn. 20: 17ff.). Both of these incidents had occurred early in the day, but were as yet unknown to the two travellers who had set out for home in the freshness of the morning.

The theme of their conversation was, naturally, Jesus. They were troubled in mind and could not comprehend all that had happened. It was difficult to understand how their Master, worker of so many striking miracles, who had preached so eloquently and persuasively of the kingdom of God, could finally have come to such an ignominious end. They had thought he was the Messiah; so Peter had declared him (Mt. 16:16), and in reply Jesus had not rebuked him but on the contrary had made him the extraordinary promise of the primacy. The high priest had adjured Christ by the living God to answer the question "Art thou the Christ?", and the calm reply given in the face of certain death had been affirmative (Mt. 26:63). But now he was dead and buried. What did it all come to?

II. THE MEETING WITH CHRIST: 15-17

And it came to pass, while they were conversing and arguing together, that Jesus himself also drew near and went along with them; but their eyes were held that they should not recognize him. And he said to them: What words are these that you are exchanging as you walk and are sad?

It was at this juncture of their prolonged discussion, ἐν τῷ ὁμιλεῖν αὐτοὺς καὶ συνζητεῖν (v. 15),⁷ that a fellow-traveller joined them and marched along with them. It was the risen Christ, but "their eyes were held that they should not recognize him: ἐκρατοῦντο τοῦ μὴ ἐπιγινῶναι αὐτόν (v. 16). The use of τοῦ with the infinitive, so frequently employed by Luke and Paul, ordinarily indicates purpose,⁸ and certainly in this case it was part of the divine plan that they should not recognize him. Other explanations might also be offered, such as, for example, the different appearance a risen body might have. Actually, Mary Magdalen

⁷ Blass-Debrunner, *Neutestamentliche Grammatik* (6th ed., 1931), 404: dative infinitive in temporal sense.

⁸ Blass-Debrunner, *op. cit.*, § 400.

and the other disciples who were fishing failed to recognize Christ at first glance (Jn. 20:14; 21:4). Some of the older commentators discussed the possibility that Christ appeared in another form, and St. Albert the Great will say that it was *in alia effigie* that they saw him. Their blindness seems to have been their own fault,⁹ and their lack of faith was the reason the empty tomb meant so little to them. At any rate, it is highly significant to note that their eyes were not opened until after the Scriptures had been explained to them.

Christ spoke first, asking (though he knew full well) what they were talking about. One may sense the surprise of the disciples at this question, which was an invitation to share with a stranger a matter so close to their hearts. A man does not speak of all things with everyone, and the two disciples, startled and for the moment undecided whether to trust the stranger or not, stopped in the middle of the road to decide what to do.¹⁰

It is Cleophas who first decided to speak. His name is an abbreviated form of Κλεοπατρός. He is not however, to be identified with Clopas of John 19:25, the husband of the Mary who stood at the foot of the Cross. The most we can say of him is that he was a citizen of Emmaus.¹¹ As for the other disciple; there is a vigorous lack of unanimity as to his name. Origen, because of the variant reading of verse 34, identified him with Simon (i.e., St. Peter); and so did Clement of Alexandria. Ambrose named him Ammaon; gravé, erudite Epiphanius suggested Nathanael, while Saint Gregory¹² was followed by Saints Bonaventure and Albert the Great in identifying him with Luke.¹³

Cleophas speaks. It is difficult for him to realize that this stranger could have been in Jerusalem and be unaware of the things that had taken place there but a few days ago, but his

⁹ St. Gregory, in MPL 76, 1182: De se ergo loquentibus praesentiam exhibuit, sed de se dubitantibus cognitionis suae speciem abscondit.

¹⁰ καὶ ἐστάθησαν, a better text with Sinaiticus, B, C, and other MSS. in its favor. It is true that σταθῆναι is rarely used for "halt" or "stop," but cf., Apoc. 8:3. Because of this, E, F, G, H, and other MSS. (Latin and Syriac) have inserted ἐστέ, which the Vg. adopts.

¹¹ So St. Jerome, in MPL 22, 625, 628.

¹² MPL 75, 517.

¹³ St. Luke nowhere in his gospel gives indications that he has seen the Lord, and it seems certain he never did. Cf., Muratorian Fragment, in E.B., 1, Lucas iste medicus . . . Dominum tamen nec ipse vidit in carne.

astonishment was destined to be sharpened further still when Christ countered his question with a further question: *What things?* Genuinely startled at this, the two disciples began to explain concerning Jesus of Nazareth. He was a prophet said by some to be Elias, or Jeremias (Mt. 16:14). In any event he was *mighty alike in work and word before God and all the people* (v. 19). Thus they go on, in words St. Peter will use often in his sermons in days to come (Acts 2:23; 3:15; 4:10). They had thought Christ a great man, a prophet, yes, they had even dared hope he was the Messiah who was to lead the Israelites out of their Roman captivity. But their eager expectations and plans for the Messiah had been brutally cut short by brisk action on the part of *the chief priests and rulers, who delivered Jesus up to death and crucified him* (v. 20). Everyone knows that the Roman soldiery carried out the sentence of death, for at this time the Jews could no longer exercise the *ius gladii*; but if it had not been for the hierarchy, Christ would not have been put to this terrible death. Cleophas places the blame where it rightfully belonged: on the heads of his own people, and in particular upon their leaders. So Jesus had died on the cross, and his brilliant career ended in the darkness and silence of the tomb. That had been three days ago, and *today is the third day since these things came to pass* (v. 21). They speak of the third day as if it were something special, as if it marked the end of everything; and the third day is here, in fact it will soon be over, but nothing had happened to make it anything out of the ordinary. Nothing, that is, outside of the incredible rumor started by some of the women who had formed part of the company around Jesus; these had gone to the tomb early this morning, and had returned with the unlikely story that the tomb was empty and that they *had seen a vision of angels who said that he is alive* (Lk. 24:1-8). Others had gone to check up on this—Peter and John—but Cleophas and his companion had left Jerusalem before hearing their report, or possibly even after hearing it, if ἀπὸ λαοῦ τίνος includes Peter and John, who had indeed found the tomb empty, but had seen no angels. Had the women imagined things? If he had really risen, would he not have appeared to the apostles? But no one had seen him, etc. . . .

Our Lord (for *we* know it was He) did not interrupt the disciples until they had ended their tale, but then He began, and He who had been such a sympathetic listener now spoke almost

roughly,¹⁴ *O foolish ones, ἀνόητοι*,¹⁵ i.e., lacking perspicacity and insight, *slow of heart to believe in all that the prophets have spoken* (v. 25); men thinking with their wills and not with their intellects! How is it they cling so tenaciously to their own preconceived idea of the role of the Messias! Are they going to pout now because God did not conform himself to their plans? How stupid to fix their eyes on those scriptural passages which emphasized the power and glory of the Messias, to the exclusion of the many other passages which foretold his sufferings! *Did not Christ have to suffer these things before entering into his glory?* (v. 26). It was necessary (ἔδει), i.e., according to the eternal decree, that Christ die in order to redeem mankind; and the redemption of mankind by the death on the Cross was in complete accord with the inspired word of God. It was necessary that He die, so that the Scriptures might be fulfilled.

Twenty miles would have been too short a distance if Christ had explained *in all the Scriptures the things referring to Himself, beginning with Moses and the prophets* (v. 27). We cannot state absolutely which of the prophecies He did explain, but it does not seem likely that He would have omitted the "fifth gospel," as Isaias' chapter fifty-three has been called because of its description of the Man of Sorrows. Nor is it unlikely that He explained to them the meaning of Psalm 21, which reads like an eye-witness account of His Passion. There were many others, of course. The exposition must have been brilliant, as our Lord's sermons unfailingly were, and it was not long before the earthly hearts of the disciples had been set on fire by what St. Albert the Great described as the *verbis ignitis* or burning words of Christ. "I have come to cast fire upon the earth, and what will I but that it be kindled"? (Lk. 12:49). The Passion and Death of the Master was not a scandal after all, for it had all been foretold, and His suffering and shame and death were all steps leading to his glory. Calvary was a door opening into the kingdom of heaven, wherein the redeemed will find their Redeemer not dead but risen and glorious.

¹⁴ St. Albert the Great calls this the *instructio illuminationis*. Cf. Valensin-Huby, *S. Luc* (Paris, 1929), p. 435: "Ce qu'il faut à ces découragés plus que des exhortations directes à l'espérance, c'est la lumière des enseignements qui réconfortent."

¹⁵ Cp. Gal. 3:1, and the highly charged text of Hebr. 5:12; how little they had profited from his teaching.

III. RECOGNITION: 28-32

Luke clearly notes that the disciples had reached their destination: *they drew near to the village to which they were going*. The following scene then took place not in a hostel but in their own home. When the three travellers had come to the place where Cleophas and his companion had to turn off from the highway, Jesus *acted as though he were going on* (v. 28). In this gesture of our Lord there is certainly no implied deceit, but instead there is definitely the lesson that unless the disciples had asked Him to come with them, He would not have come. *And they urged him saying, "Stay with us, for it is getting towards evening and the day is now far spent." And he went in with them* (v. 29).¹⁶

Mane nobiscum, Domine! are the gracious words that fell from their lips, yet they are not without a certain insistence and warmth. Anyone who has had the experience knows how it is at times well nigh impossible to extricate oneself from the pressing invitations of the friendly natives in the Near East. Politeness, it seems, demands that invitations of this nature be urgent and extended with a sort of violence,¹⁷ and this naturally would lead to certain exaggerations calculated to make a refusal extremely difficult. The disciples in this case stress the fact that the day is getting towards evening. As a matter of fact, any hour in the afternoon, early or late, would be "towards evening," and these two, unwilling to lose their engaging companion and wishing to continue their talk in the intimacy of their own home, declare roundly that the "day is now far spent."

Their prayer is answered, and Jesus turns from the highway with them. Soon they are at home. One of the first things to occupy a man's attention in such a circumstance as the end of a journey is the matter of food. The three recline at table together, with the stranger occupying the place at the head; for no less a place would be worthy of so learned a person. *And it came to pass when he reclined at table with them* (ἐν τῷ κατακλιθῆναι αὐτὸν μετ' αὐτῶν), *Jesus took the bread and blessed and broke and began handing it to them* (v. 30).

¹⁶ Probandi autem erant, si hi qui eum etsi necdum ut Deum diligenter, saltem ut peregrinum amare potuissent. Sed quia esse extranei a caritate non poterant hi cum quibus Veritas gradiebatur, eum ad hospitium quasi peregrinum vocant. Thus St. Gregory, in MPL 76, 1182.

¹⁷ Lagrange *S. Luc*, p. 607. Cp., Acts 16:15.

The question is, did Christ give the disciples the Holy Eucharist, or plain ordinary bread? It is a famous difficulty, and a solution may be reached by weighing both the Scriptures and the voice of tradition in the matter. To begin with the tradition, we find St. Augustine holding strongly for the first opinion, that Christ gave the Eucharist to Cleophas and his companion.¹⁸ St. Jerome very briefly remarks that our Lord had "transformed the house of Cleophas at Emmaus into a Church,"¹⁹ presumably because He there blessed, broke, and handed the bread to His hosts. St. Bede adds his voice to that of Augustine and Jerome, but St. Thomas Aquinas will not invoke this text in connection with the Blessed Sacrament. Among the Greek Fathers, none held for the giving of the Eucharist before Theophylact (11th century). On the other side, we find that since the 16th century the negative opinion has slowly but surely gained the ascendancy, although, to do so, it had to part company with such exegetes as Maldonatus, who proposed this text as an argument in favor of communion under one species, a point which was at the time particularly attacked by the Protestants.²⁰

The meaning of ἐν τῇ κλάσει τοῦ ἄρτου (35) is difficult. The phrase seems to have the technical meaning of the Eucharist in the Acts (Acts. 2:42; 20:7; and cf. 1 Cor. 10:16), and there should be interpreted to mean not merely the breaking of the bread but the eating of it as well. However, in Luke 20:30 there is not question of their eating the bread which Christ began to hand to them, but simply the statement that they recognized Christ while he performed at table the function proper to a father of a family, namely, the giving of thanks, blessing, breaking, distributing. It might be that our Lord had His own way of doing this, so that the familiar gestures were all the two disciples needed. At any rate, there is really not much room for argument beyond the similarity of the words used in description here and at the Last Supper, for there the similarity ends. At the Last Supper the Eucharist was instituted after they had eaten, here they had just reclined at table; a cup was, likewise, blessed at the Last Supper, here no cup is mentioned; at the Last Supper it is specifically stated that the Eucharistic Bread was given to

¹⁸ MPL 33,644. "...nullus debet ambigere."

¹⁹ MPL 22,883.

²⁰ Maldonatus, *Comm. in Quatuor Evangelistas* (ed. Sausen, 1843) IV, pp. 169 ff.

be eaten (Mt. 26:26-28 and *l. p.*), whereas here nothing is said of eating. It would, furthermore, have been very strange if Christ would have repeated the sacred gestures of the Last Supper with two disciples who had not been present at the institution of the Holy Eucharist, especially since very shortly afterwards he would only partake of *ordinary* food with the apostles themselves (Lk. 24:36-43; cf. also Jn. 21:1-23) when He appeared to them behind the closed doors and on the shores of Galilee! The two disciples at Emmaus, then, recognized him *in* the breaking of the bread, not after it, nor while they ate it.

No sooner had they recognized Christ in their road-companion than He disappeared; *He vanished from their sight* (v. 31).²¹ It is easy to imagine the effect of this on the disciples: blinking, bewildered, looking about to see where He had gone, looking first at the bread on the table and at the bread still in their hands (for *he began handing it to them*, v. 30), then at one another, with the light of understanding slowly mounting in their eyes, then their leaping up with thunderous shouts of delirious joy. Why, of course! *Was not our heart burning within us while he was speaking on the road and explaining to us the Scriptures?*"²²

IV. THE RETURN TO JERUSALEM: 33-35.

Realizing the tremendous importance of what had just happened to them, the two disciples determined to share at once this fierce joy rising out of their burning hearts, and to share it above all with the Apostles who were known to be in Jerusalem. It was the time of the full moon; the road would be easy to follow. Probably they obtained some sort of mounts to speed them on their way. St. Luke speaks of the "Eleven" when referring here to the Apostles; we know that Judas was missing, and Thomas too, so "Eleven" means, as he knew everyone would understand, simply the band of Apostles. When Cleophas and his companion arrived in the Holy City, *they found the Eleven gathered together*

²¹ ἄφαντος, poetic, for ἀφανῆ; in conjunction with ἀπ' αὐτῶν this indicates that He not merely made Himself invisible, but disappeared altogether from their presence. Cf. Lagrange, *op. cit.*, p. 609.

²² The alternate reading κεκαλυμμένη for καιομένη is supported by D, *sah.*, c, l, e, "Was not our heart heavy, or veiled, or blind... etc.," which hardly seems to be an appropriate remark under the circumstances. Thanks to Luke, we have this exquisite touch of "hearts burning" on hearing the words of Christ, a touch which quickens the whole narrative.

and those who were with them saying: "The Lord has risen indeed, and has appeared to Simon" (33-34).

Due to a faulty reading of his text²³ Origen thought that the statement "We have seen the Lord, etc." was spoken by the two newly-arrived disciples, and so was led to identify Cleophas' companion with Simon Peter. Besides going against the whole context and verse 24, this is improbable, for St. Peter would surely have been mentioned by name if he had been the companion of Cleophas on the road. The Simon of whom the text speaks is an important figure, singled out above the others by reason of the fact that he has been accorded a vision of the risen Christ; who else could this be but St. Peter, for we know of no other Simon who deserves such an honor. Our conclusion, then, is that at the first words of Cleophas, the Eleven and the disciples with them cried out, *Indeed the Lord has risen, and appeared to Simon*, a solemn testimony that has never ceased to ring out triumphantly in the Church. He had risen, and all at Jerusalem knew it. Cleophas and his companion corroborated this with the story of what had *happened on the journey, and how they recognized him in the breaking of the bread (34-35).*

Many people find Christ on the Cross as much a stranger to them as Christ on the road to Emmaus was to Cleophas and the other disciple. He is unknown. God grant that they recognize him before the end of their journey and that the hearts of men will be again set on fire, because while they walk the road of life they hear the burning words of the Stranger upon the Cross.

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²³ λέγοντες as in D, for λέγοντας.

THE CANTICLE OF CANTICLES IN MYSTICAL THEOLOGY

REV. PASCHAL P. PARENTE, PH.D., S.T.D.

I

Mystical Theology in its most sublime form is commonly called the *spiritual marriage* or the transforming union. The union of the soul with God through charity and sanctifying grace, known in this life by faith only, is fully enjoyed and made manifest in the light of glory. Some privileged souls, however, receive from God even in this life a perception or awareness of this union, of the supernatural, of God Himself. It is a kind of experimental knowledge of God, the true form of *theognosia* or mystical knowledge. This knowledge is granted at more or less long intervals, and for a brief period at a time, in the mystical states known as the *prayer of quiet* and in the various degrees of the *ecstatic union*. When the loving awareness of God becomes most transcendent and permanent we have the mystical marriage. The analogy of this supreme mystical union with marriage is based on the fact that, like marriage, it is the fusion of two lives in one. It is, like marriage, the most intimate and most permanent union in this life.

It is like water descending from heaven into a river or spring, where one is so mixed with the other that it cannot be discovered which is the river water and which the rain-water. . . This is, perhaps, that which St. Paul means when he says, *He who adheres to God is one with Him*, alluding to this sublime marriage, which presupposes that God is united to the soul by union.¹

Souls in this state are thoroughly spiritual. They have been prepared by a series of active and passive purgations and trials known as the *dark night*. The divine light of contemplation and the divine presence lovingly experienced, have sublimated the soul above all earthly and bodily affections. The exalted spirituality, the ardent love of God, the divine condescension and familiarity confer upon the soul a certain liberty of expression, a freedom in using a love-language which reminds one of the language of the Canticle of Canticles.

Mystical Theology and Solomon's most excellent song, *שיר השירים*, are very intimately connected. We venture to call the Canticle of Canticles an allegorical dramatization of the various mystical

¹ St. Teresa, *Interior Castle*, VII Mansion, Chapter 2.

states. It suffices to call to mind the prayer of quiet in all its manifestations of mystical sleep and mystical inebriation, the ecstatic union with the raptures, the flight of the spirit and the mystical espousals, and finally the mystical marriage. Man's spirit in an animal body is capable, with the help of divine grace, of emancipating itself from sensual love and affections to such an extent that it can love God with a purity and ardour that resemble the love of the heavenly spirits. When the human soul has reached such perfection it discovers the insufficiency of human language in expressing spiritual concepts and ideas without resorting to images taken from the senses. This is especially true of the concept of spiritual love, the love between God and the soul. Every idea of a tender, intimate, ardent love that man possesses is taken ultimately from natural love and is symbolised by conjugal union. Herein is to be found the cause of all misapprehension and misunderstanding of both the mystical states and the Canticle of Canticles. They are both little understood because they use human words and expressions in speaking of divine love. What other words would man understand better here below? Angels and blessed souls enjoying the Beatific Vision understand and speak those "secret words (*ἄρρητα ῥήματα*), which is not granted to man to utter" (2 Cor. 12:4). The soundless words of the heavenly language are far above everything that reflects the flesh, the senses, and human miseries. They are a language that is not spoken here below for "it is not granted to man to utter." Mortal man must be taught the mysteries of divine love in his own language and with his own earthly ideas of love. It is obvious that when words and expressions of human love are employed to express divine or spiritual love, such words and expressions must be understood allegorically and not literally. Should we take the language of the Canticle and many expressions of Mystical Theology in the obvious literal sense, we would discredit and debase them to such a degree that the Canticle could no longer be considered a sacred book nor could Mystical Theology be deemed a sacred science.

It is exactly its spiritual and allegorical interpretation that has vindicated to the Canticle of Canticles a divine origin and a place among the *canonical* books in both Jewish and Christian tradition. Otherwise, how could a book be considered as divinely inspired for our instruction and edification in which the name

of God is never mentioned and no religious or supernatural idea ever seems to occur? How could the Canticle of Canticles be numbered among the sacred books of both the Synagogue and the Christian Church if it were to be understood simply in its literal sense as an epithalamium, a melodramatic interpretation of the delights and the anxieties of the wedded love of Solomon and Pharaoh's daughter or, perhaps, a country maiden?

Rabbi Akiba, a contemporary of the Apostle St. Paul, is witness of the high esteem the Canticle of Solomon enjoyed in the Synagogue in his days when he writes: "Nobody in Israel has ever doubted that the Canticle of Canticles is a divine book, for the whole world is not worth the day on which the Canticle of Canticles was given [by God] to Israel. All the books of the Scripture are sacred but the book of the Canticles is most sacred."²

Up to the time of the so called reformation nobody in the Christian Church had denied the divine origin of the Canticle except Theodore of Mopsuestia, who was condemned and severely rebuked for his presumption by the fifth general council in 553. The Canticle of Canticles is listed in the canon of the sacred books by the Council of Trent and by the Vatican Council.

Rationalists of the modern age generally deny the divine origin of the Canticle, because they cannot understand anything supernatural, nor can they see any allegory of the spiritual, veiled by the literal sense of the text. Reviving more or less the views of Theodore of Mopsuestia, of Abraham Ibn Ezra, of Grotius, Clericus, etc., they hold that the subject of the book is one of a purely natural love, reciprocal affection and admiration, offending sometimes against decency. Their opinion about the nature of the mystical states and mystical phenomena is of the same kind: mere illusions, morbid conditions, forms of hysteria! Thus, Mystical Theology and the Canticle find themselves associated in the condemnation of the rationalists and unbelievers. We find the Canticle and Mystical Theology also associated in Jewish and Christian tradition, where they have been made the subject of profound studies and an object of singular esteem and admiration. It is only under the latter positive aspect that we shall consider the relation between the Canticle of Canticles and Mystical Theology in the following pages.

² *Jadaim*, 3. 5.

II

The allegorical interpretation of the Canticle of Canticles is mentioned by the Midrash and the Targum. This book of king Solomon is explained there as depicting the loving and tender relations between God and His chosen people. The allegory of marriage and espousals is introduced by the inspired author in order to convey an idea of the divine love and condescension. This allegory or metaphor of marriage and espousals in expressing the love of God for his own people is not limited to the Canticle of Solomon. This figure was popular among the prophets, and it is quite common in the New Testament. In Osee, the Lord speaks to Israel saying: "I will espouse thee to me for ever: and I will espouse thee to me in justice, and in judgment, and in mercy, and in commiserations. And I will espouse thee to me in faith: and thou shalt know that I am the Lord" (1:19-20).

We encounter the same figure at a much earlier date in Ps. 44: "Hearken, o daughter, and see, and incline thy ear: and forget thy people and thy father's house. And the king shall greatly desire thy beauty; for he is the Lord thy God, and him they shall adore" (Ps. 44:11-12). In the Scriptures of the New Testament we find that Christ shows special predilection for this graceful allegory. He often compares himself to a bridegroom in His relations to His Church: "Can the wedding guests mourn, as long as the bridegroom is with them? But the days will come, when the bridegroom shall be taken away from them, and then they will fast" (Mt. 9:15). In the parable of the ten virgins the kingdom of heaven is likened to a marriage feast. The wise virgins that were found ready when the bridegroom arrived "went in with him to the marriage feast and the door was shut" (Mt. 25:1-13). St. John the Baptist speaks of Christ as of one who has a bride and is, consequently, a bridegroom: "I am not the Christ, but have been sent before him. He who has the bride, is the bridegroom; but the friend of the bridegroom, who stands and hears him, rejoices exceedingly at the voice of the bridegroom" (Jn. 3:28-29). Speaking of the "great sacrament" of marriage, St. Paul proposes the example of Christ and His Church to Christian husbands and wives as the example of a model couple: "... a husband is head of the wife, just as Christ is head of the Church... But just as the Church is subject to Christ, so also let the wives be to their husbands in all

things. Husbands, love your wives, as Christ also loved the Church" (Eph. 5:23-25). In St. John's Apocalypse the union of Christ and His triumphant Church in heaven is called a marriage: "Let us be glad and rejoice, and give glory to him; for the marriage of the Lamb has come, and his spouse has prepared herself. . . . And he said to me: "Write: Blessed are they who are called to the marriage supper of the Lamb" (Apoc. 19:7,9). Christ was speaking of this marriage of the Lamb when He said by way of a parable: "The kingdom of heaven is like a king who made a marriage feast for his son" (Mt. 22:2; Lk. 14:16).

No wonder, therefore, Christian tradition took over the allegorical interpretation of the Canticle from the Jews, seeing in it the most sublime expression of the love of God for his people. In the process of adaptation of this allegory to Christian ideas the Word, or Christ, took the place of Yahweh; the Church, that of the Synagogue. This is the *Christological* interpretation of the Canticle. It was first introduced by Hippolytus of Rome and by Origen, and it soon became popular. It has remained so to our day. In the course of time a few variations of a mystical and ascetical nature were introduced. The Christian soul took the place of the Church as the mystical bride of Christ. This is the interpretation of the Canticle that was most favoured by such great mystics as St. Bernard, Gerson, Richard of St. Laurence, St. Teresa, St. John of the Cross. With them the Canticle offers an allegory or dramatization of the mystical states and especially of the mystical nuptials of the perfect Christian soul with the Son of God. Along with the Christological interpretation, a *Mariological* interpretation was introduced very early by St. Ephrem, St. Ambrose, St. Epiphanius, St. Peter Chrysologus. They understood the Virgin Mary to be the real, mystical bride of the Canticle. Their interpretation is encouraged by the liturgy of the Church. In several feasts of the Virgin Mary both the Divine Office and the Mass adopt with preference verses and lessons from the book of the Canticle. And, indeed, what other soul was there that could claim in all truth to have celebrated the mystical nuptials with God except Mary Immaculate, the true Mother of God? The Fathers used to interpret occasionally one or more parts of the Canticle in a Mariological sense. Since the twelfth century, however, the entire Canticle of Canticles has been applied to the Virgin Mary by such authors as Rupert de Deutz, Denis the Carthusian, Cornelius a Lapide, Nigidius and

others. P. Taussi in his *Le Cantique des Cantiques* (Abbeville: 1923), sees in the Canticles the most transcendent Mariology or *Theologia Mariana*.

Taking as a criterion those texts of the Scripture that deal with the relations of God to His people, we may give the first place in our allegorical interpretation of the mystical bride to the people of God, (the Church and the Virgin Mary), the second place to the individual Christian soul. None of these particular interpretations excludes the other because in every case we have either the whole or a part of the people of God which is the object of God's love and predilection. In every case the interpretation of the Canticle is allegorical. According to Vigouroux,³ "The allegorical interpretation is the only interpretation admitted by the entire Jewish and Christian tradition." "This book [the Canticle] must be understood in the spiritual sense, namely, in the sense of the union of the Church with Jesus Christ, under the names of bride and groom, and of the union of the soul with the Divine Word."⁴ "What is written here makes one think of nuptials, but what is meant is the union of the human soul with God."⁵ "The Canticle of Canticles is the spiritual joy of saintly souls at the nuptials of the King and Queen of the City, of Christ and His Church. This joy, however, is hidden under the veil of an allegory in order to render the desire more ardent and the discovery more delightful at the apparition of the bridegroom and his bride."⁶ Similar is the opinion of St. Jerome.⁷ St. Bernard in his first sermon *Super Cantic.* voices the idea expressed by the Fathers before him when he says: "Solomon, inspired by God, sang the praises of Christ and his Church, the grace of sacred love, and the mysteries of the eternal nuptials."⁸

No other book of the Old Testament has been commented upon so often as the Canticle of Canticles. This is especially true since the twelfth century of the Christian era, when a great mystical movement began in the Occident. These commentaries on the Canticle furnish the most precious material for speculative Mystical Theology. In this respect, Origen's commentary on the

³ *Dictionnaire de la Bible*, s.v., "Cantique des Cantiques."

⁴ Origen, *In Cantic.*, Hom. I.

⁵ St. Gregory of Nyssa, *In Cant. Cantic.*, Hom. I.

⁶ St. Augustine, *De Civitate Dei*, XVII, 20.

⁷ *Ad Paulam*, Ep. 53.

⁸ *Serm.*, I, 8.

Canticle in ten books deserves the greatest consideration. His interpretation of the text is allegorical. His method consists in proposing first the *historia* as a basis for the allegorical sense, the only one really intended by God, and then he proceeds to make the application to the Church and the perfect soul. Worthy of consideration in Ascetical and Mystical Theology are his observations on spiritual and carnal love, on the role played by angels and demons in spiritual life, on the spiritual senses, on contemplation, on the degrees of perfection, on the gifts of the holy Spirit, on the order of charity, on the visits of God to the soul. The commentary on the Canticle of St. Gregory of Nyssa is in form of homilies, fifteen in all. It stops at chapter 6, verse 8 of the Canticle. Under the allegorical veil of an epithalamium, he recognises the mystical union of the soul with God. Such ascetical and mystical questions as *apatheia*, *theognosia*, and *theoria* or contemplation are fully developed in these homilies. Origen's commentary on the Canticle and that of St. Gregory of Nyssa are the best in Greek patristic literature.

It is not our intention to give a review of the commentaries on the Canticle; a fairly complete list of such commentaries is to be found in the *Dictionnaire de Spiritualité*, s.v., "Cantique des Cantiques."

In order to show the ever living interest in Solomon's most excellent song and also a new trend in the mystical Christological interpretation, we shall mention a few of the works published on the subject in modern times. The titles explain often the character of the book, like: *Das hohe Lied Salomons von der heiligen Liebe*, by P. Schegg (Munich: 1885). *Le Cantique des Cantiques ou l'amour réciproque de Jésus-Christ et le l'Église*, by Brevet (Paris: 1890). *Das Geheimniss des Glaubens, d.i. die Weisheit oder das Hohelied erklart durch das Sacrament des allerheiligsten Fronleichnams*, by Gorteler (Muenster: 1885). *Le Cantique des Cantiques appliqué à l'Eucharistie*, by Mgr. La Bouillerie. *Le Cantique de l'union a Dieu*, by P. E. Lebeau, S.J. (Paris: 1925), etc. The new trend in the Christological interpretation is the Holy Eucharist, or the mystical union of the soul with Christ in Holy Communion. This mystical application of the Canticle was not unknown to the great mystics of former days, like St. Teresa, St. Alphonsus Liguori, and others, but more has been

written on the subject in our generation, which is rightly styled the Eucharistic era.

Interpreters of the Canticle have often complained about the lack of a logical order in that book. They forget the fact that a mystical book of that form is based on the logic of the heart rather than that of the mind, and that love little cares about logical order. Still a certain order and unity prevails through the entire book; there is unity of purpose, and a unity of style and persons. Several attempts have been made at a rigorous logical division of the Canticle. Worthy of mention for its mystical implications is the division introduced by Bossuet in his preface to the Canticle (3rd. ed. Bar-le-Duc: 1863). According to him the Canticle of Canticles is divided into seven songs according to the seven days of the week, every day marking a progress in love, in the following order:

- 1st. day, imperfect love (1:1-2:6);
- 2nd. day, penitent love (2:7-17);
- 3rd. day, love purified by trials (3:1-4:1);
- 4th. day, love perfected by trials (4:2-6:8);
- 5th. day, love worthy of admiration (6:9-7:10);
- 6th. day, love's complete surrender (7:11-8:3);
- 7th. day, love at rest (8:4-14).

This division has been admitted, in principle at least, by several authors, like Calmet, Lowth, and others, but they all differ greatly in details. This idea of the various degrees, trials, and vicissitudes of love comes very close to what we have called a dramatization of the mystical states. Here, too, love imperfect at first is purified and made perfect by means of passive trials and purgations—the dark night of the soul. Thus purified, love is admitted to the divine espousals in a sublime ecstasy called the flight of the spirit. Finally, in the transforming union, known as spiritual marriage, love finds peace and rest in a blessed, permanent union.

III

After the Gospel of St. John, no other sacred book has enjoyed the predilection of the mystics as the Canticle of Canticles. Only a mystic can easily discover the divine beauty hidden under the veil of idyllic poetry so rich in oriental color and imagery. The language of the mystics is not for everybody to use. It is pure sentimentality in the mouth of the uninitiated. For this reason,

the reading of the Canticles of Solomon was not permitted to all indiscriminately for many centuries in the past. As we have remarked repeatedly, the only sense of the Canticle intended by God is the spiritual or allegorical sense. Those who stop at the literal sense of the text and perceive nothing of the spiritual meaning read something that refers to natural love only and find anything but edification. A carnal man should not read this book. It is the book of perfect souls, of souls purified by a life of endless trials and mortifications whose conversation is in heaven.

We shall give an idea of the predilection of the mystics for the Canticle of Canticles by the example of two great masters of spiritual life and most eminent mystics of the modern age, St. Teresa of Avila and St. John of the Cross.

The great St. Teresa knew only those parts of the Canticle that she read in the Divine Office. It was about the year 1577, at a time when she had already composed her great mystical work the *Castillo Interior* and had herself reached the transforming union or spiritual marriage that she wrote her book entitled *Conceptos del Amor de Dios sobre algunas Palabras de los Cantares*, or "Conceptions of Divine Love on some Words of the Canticles." The history of this book is so typical of the attitude of the uninitiated towards the Canticle that it deserves to be recorded here. According to Father Gratian, who published what was saved of the *Conceptos* in the year 1612, St. Teresa had written this work by the command of one of her confessors. Another confessor, however, alarmed at the presumption of a *woman* of writing on such a difficult and delicate subject, commanded her to burn the manuscript at once without himself having seen it. St. Teresa obeyed immediately and consigned her manuscript to the flames. It was providential that a certain nun had previously made for herself a copy of the first seven chapters of that manuscript, and these were preserved from destruction. Reading them now, one cannot but deplore the rash action of that confessor, whose name was never divulged by St. Teresa.

The purpose of the *Conceptos* was explained by the Saint at the end of the seventh chapter thus: "My purpose, when I began, was to let you understand, daughters, how you might delight yourselves when you hear any words of the Canticles, and that you might meditate on the great mysteries contained in

them, although in your own opinion they may seem obscure." An incident, reported in chapter one of *Conceptos*, is of particular interest for us:

I remember well I once heard a religious man give a very excellent sermon, the greater part of which was about those caresses of the Spouse with God; but the sermon caused great laughing among the audience; and everything that he said was taken in such bad part (for he spoke on love, the subject being the *Mandatum*, he preached on certain words of the Canticles) that I was astonished. I see clearly that it is owing to our having too little practice in the love of God, which makes us think a soul cannot speak with God in such expressions.

This incident speaks for itself. A saint, a great mystic, is edified by a sermon on the Canticle. The common person "having too little practice in the love of God" laughs! Speaking of herself, it seems, the Saint adds: "I know a person who for many years lived in great fears, and nothing could comfort her, till our Lord was pleased she should hear certain words from the Canticles, and by them she understood her soul was going on well."⁹

The Eucharistic application of the Canticle, which has commanded special attention of late, was not foreign to St. Teresa. She refers to the sacramental union of the soul with Jesus in Holy Communion as a justification for using expressions of the Canticle like this one: "Let him kiss me with the kiss of his mouth" (C. C. 1:1).

O my Lord and my God, what words are these for a worm to utter to its Maker! I acknowledge these words may have many meanings; but the soul that is so inflamed with love as to make her a fool desires nothing else but to utter these words, that God would not take away His love from her. O Lord, what are we astonished at? Is not the deed more astonishing? Do we not unite ourselves with the Most Holy Sacrament? I was thinking also whether the Bride here requested the favour which Christ bestowed upon us later, when He became our food... O my Lord, if a kiss implies peace and friendship, why do not souls beg of You to ratify it with them? What better thing can we ask of You? That which I request of You, my Lord, is to grant me this peace with a kiss of Your mouth.¹⁰

One more quotation out of the same book, to hear how this seraphic virgin esteems and makes her own words and ideas of the bride of the Canticle:

⁹ *Conceptos*, I.

¹⁰ *Conceptos*, I.

O Lord of heaven and earth! How is it possible that, though living in this mortal life, one may enjoy you with such particular friendship, and that the Holy Ghost should so plainly express it in these words; and yet we will not understand what are the caresses wherewith His Majesty regales souls in these Canticles? What courtings, what sweet attractions! Only one word would be sufficient to dissolve us into you... By how many ways and means do you express love for us!... By certain words which wound the soul who loves you, words which you scatter in the Canticles, and which you teach her to say to you!... Now, my Lord, I ask you nothing else in this life but "to kiss me with the kiss of Your mouth," and this in such a way that I should not be able, even though I wished, to withdraw myself from this union and friendship.¹¹

The predilection of St. John of the Cross for the Canticle is manifest from the most mystical and most beautiful of his works, his Spiritual Canticle (*Cantico Espiritual*). This work is not only an imitation but almost a paraphrase of the Canticle of Canticles. "It is an incomparable canticle, perhaps the most sublime that was ever intoned here on earth to divine love after the great Canticle of the wise king Solomon, a canticle that inebriates every mystical soul."¹² He wrote it while in the prison of his order in Toledo. The *cancion primera*, or first strophe, is reminiscent of the unhappy situation and of his abandonment: "*A donde te escondiste, Amado, y me dejaste con gemido?*" In the explanation of these and other verses, St. John of the Cross refers often to corresponding expressions of the Canticle. The same ardent desire, says the Mystical Doctor in explaining the first strophe, was expressed in the divine Canticle when the Spouse, longing for union with the Divine Word, said: "Show me, o thou whom my soul loveth, where thou feedest, where thou liest in the midday" (C. C. 1:6).

The dialogue form of the Canticle of Canticles is imitated by St. John of the Cross in his *Cantico Espiritual*. Here, too, God and the soul are represented under the allegorical figure of bride and bridegroom, *la esposa* and *el esposo*. For him the bride is the mystical soul, the bridegroom is the Son of God. We meet the same idyllic imagery of flowery meadows, of aromatic gardens, of mountains and valleys, the same fears and anxieties, the same inebriating delights of joy and peace. All this is met in

¹¹ *Conceptos*, III.

¹² P. Silverio de S. Teresa, *Obras de S. Juan de la Cruz*, Vol. III, *Introduccion*.

the metrical part of the *Cantico Epiritual* and receives a mystical and theological explanation in the prose or *declaration* of the same work, the most outstanding in Mystical Theology.

The esteem and predilection of the great Carmelite Doctor for the Canticle was manifested even on his death-bed. Only a few hours before he died, "He requested that they should read to him some passage out of the Canticle for which he had a great devotion. They did so and he, on hearing those tender expressions of love, was so deeply touched that he kept repeating them to himself and saying: Oh! what precious pearls!"¹³

The Talmud, the Targumim and Midrashim agree in affirming that the Jews have always attributed the Canticle to king Solomon. The title of the book seems to indicate Solomon as its author. Internal arguments confirm this opinion, which is still the most common among Catholic critics. Accepting this conclusion, we see in the known books of Solomon, Proverbs and Canticle of Canticles, the popular degrees of ascetical and mystical life namely, the purgative, the illuminative and the unitive way, or the states of the incipient, proficient and perfect charity. The Canticle of Canticles corresponds to the state of the mystical unitive way, to the degree of perfect charity. Interpreting as it does the most sacred and tender relations of God to His people, of Christ to His Church and to the perfect soul, it is today to the Christians what, in the words of Rabbi Akiba, it was to the Jews of old, one of the most sacred books of the Bible. Its sacredness derives not only from divine inspiration, common to all sacred books of the canon, but also from its subject which is divine love, and from its *dramatis personae*, God and His people or His Church, His Mother, the perfect soul. It is true that the love of God for man enters more or less explicitly or implicitly in every sacred book but in no other book as in the Canticle are such tender relations of divine love revealed and beautifully described. Yet, it is only an allegorical representation of the truth, a figure of future events. We are astonished at such revelation of divine love and familiarity of God with man and find it very hard to believe, but what else is the history of the New Testament? "In the beginning was the Word... and the Word was God... and the Word was made flesh and dwelt among us" (Jn. 1:1,14).

¹³ P. Gerardo, *Vida del Místico Doctor San Juan de la Cruz*, Vol. I, Chap. 9 (Toledo: (1912).

Was not the incarnation of the Son of God something infinitely more intimate, more permanent and perfect than any mystical espousals described in the Canticle? The Word's hypostatic union to human nature is infinitely more than any bond of mystical marriage. Christ's vicarious suffering and death are actual manifestations of divine love that surpass all expectations and all understanding. No royal bridegroom offered such precious gifts to his bride as Christ to his Church. "[He] delivered himself up for her (the Church): that he might sanctify her, cleansing her in the bath of water by means of the word: in order that he might present to himself the Church in all her glory, not having spot or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that she might be holy and without blemish" (Eph. 5:25-27). This, then, is the bride that Christ acquired and adorned for himself. "Thou art all fair, O my love, and there is no spot in thee" (C. C. 4:7). It was in the shadows of Mount Calvary that his spotless bride came out of His side as Eve had been formed from the side of Adam: "Till the day break, and shadows retire, I will go to the mountain of myrrh, and to the hill of frankincense" (C. C. 4:6). In the gathering darkness of Calvary, "wine mingled with myrrh" (Mk. 15:23) was offered to Christ before his supreme proof and consummation of love.

"Thou hast wounded my heart, my sister, my bride, my spouse, thou hast wounded my heart with one of thy eyes, and with one hair of thy neck" (C. C. 4:9). In his *Spiritual Canticle*, St. John of the Cross has a strophe¹⁴ which is a paraphrase of the preceding quotation. The hair of the neck, he says, is love which stands alone and it is strong, because the neck means strength. The one eye that wounded the heart of the Divine Spouse is faith that is pure and complete. This purity of faith that excludes all errors but does not exclude any of the revealed truths, this universal and active charity free of all sectarian hypocrisy and hate are found only in the true Church of Christ which is one and undivided: "One fold and one shepherd" (Jn. 10:16). "One body and one Spirit; even as you were called in one hope of your

¹⁴ *En solo aquel cabello
Que en mi cuello volar consideraste,
Mirástele en mi cuello,
Y en él preso quedaste,
Y en uno de mis ojos te llagaste.*

Cantico Espiritual, Cancion, 22.

calling. One Lord, one faith, one baptism" (Eph. 4:4-5). "One is my dove, my perfect one is *but* one, she is the only one of her mother, the chosen of her that bore her" (C. C. 6:8).

The perfect soul, like Christ's Church, is one in her undivided faith and loyalty, in her love and affection, in the singleness of purpose and desire. If we apply this idea to the Virgin Mary, we find that she is not only one but unique in her dignity of Mother of God and in the excellence of her purity and grace.

The Catholic Church is one, and unity is the secret of its beauty, perfection, and strength. Hence the admiration of the divine Spouse: "Who is she that cometh forth as the morning rising, fair as the moon, bright as the sun, terrible as an army set in array?" (C. C. 6:9).

The Church, like the perfect soul, is founded in humility, simplicity, and truth. The mystical bride admitted of herself: "I am black but beautiful, O ye daughters of Jerusalem, as the tents of Cedar, as the curtains of Solomon" (C. C. 1:4). Her unassuming appearance or dark color speaks of humility, the truth of her doctrine reveals divine beauty.

Endearing words and expressions of the Canticle are always reciprocated between the two personages of that book. One expression, however, is used exclusively by the bride, "O thou whom my soul loveth" (1:6); "He whom my soul loveth" (3:1); etc. The mystical bridegroom does not reciprocate this expression. May we not see herein an indication of the fact that the mystical bridegroom is a Divine Person?

Purity of heart, supported by constant mortification, is a condition for the granting of mystical graces. "As the lily among the thorns, so is my love among the daughters" (C. C. 2:2).

The mystical initiation in the experimental knowledge of the love of God takes place, according to Pseudo-Dionysius, "in the superbrilliant darkness of the silence that reveals mysteries."¹⁵ In the poetical style of the Canticle, the mystical initiation is expressed in the following verse: "He brought me in the cellar of wine, he set in order charity in me" (C. C. 2:4). The mystical initiation, or passivity of the soul, begins in the will. God begins by taking the heart, without letting the soul understand the why and the how. In the natural psychological process, knowledge

¹⁵ *De Mystica Theologia* I.

must precede love: *Nihil volitum quin praecognitum*. But "in a supernatural way, God may well infuse and increase love without infusing or increasing a corresponding distinct knowledge."¹⁶ Paraphrasing again verses of the Canticle, the Mystical Doctor says in this Cancion XVII: *En la interior bodega—De mi Amado bebí. . .* The sublime effects of this initiation are a complete detachment from and oblivion of all the things of this world: *Ya cosa no sabia*. In it, the soul receives the love of God: *Allí me dió su pecho*. In return, the soul consecrates itself to God promising to be His spouse: *Allí le prometí de ser su esposa*.¹⁷ To "set in order charity" in us, is to conform our will to the will of God so that we love only what God loves with purest intentions.

The first mystical experience of some duration proves to be too much for the soul in a mortal body. It causes a kind of mystical sleep, or swooning, or mystical inebriation: "Stay me up with flowers, compass me about with apples, because I languish with love" (C. C. 2:5). These mystical phenomena occur during the first degree of mystical prayer and union, a mystical state called the *prayer of quiet*. "I call it the prayer of quiet, on account of the repose it produces in all the powers, so that the person seems to possess God just as he wishes most. . . With this sweetness the whole interior and exterior man seems to be delighted, as if some very delicious ointment were poured into the inmost part of the soul, just like an exquisite perfume. . . And when she is in this enjoyment, she is so immersed and absorpt, that she seems not to be herself, but rather to be seized with a kind of divine inebriation (*una manera de borrachez divina*)."¹⁸

When the soul's faculties are completely absorbed and alienated we have the *ecstatic union* in its various forms and degrees. During ecstasy the soul is often favoured with visions and revelations. While in this state, no human interest, no earthly noise, pain or joy can distract or awake her: "I adjure you, o ye daughters of Jerusalem, by the roes, and the harts of the fields, that you stir not up, nor make the beloved to awake, till she please" (C. C. 2:7). And one such ecstatic vision of the mystical bride is described (C. C. 2:8-17). She hears the voice of the beloved,

¹⁶ St. John of the Cross, *Cantico Espiritual*, C. XVII.

¹⁷ *Cantico Esp.*, XVII.

¹⁸ St. Teresa, *Conceptos* etc., C. 4.

sees him coming, leaping joyfully over hills and mountains. She beholds him standing behind the wall of her humble house (her mortal body), looking through the windows and the lattices of her senses. She hears his loving call: "Arise, make haste, my love, my dove, my beautiful one, and come!" (C. C. 2:10). "The vineyard hath flourished" but there is still such a long time till the harvest. Great vigilance is needed in warding off dangers. Imperfections and little venial sins still afflict the soul in this state. Any little disorderly affection, if not eradicated, may eventually cause spiritual ruin and lay waste the mystical vineyard. "Catch us the little foxes that destroy the vines" (C. C. 2:15). In order to purify the soul more and more from any self-love and any kind of "little foxes," the second *dark night* falls upon the soul throwing it into consternation and spiritual agony: "I sought him whom my soul loveth: I sought him, and found him not. I will rise, and go about the city: in the streets and the broad ways I will seek him whom my soul loveth: I sought him, and found him not" (C. C. 3:1-2). How disappointing and painful for the mystical soul to be deprived of the only object of its affections! By this lesson the soul will learn the vanity of everything outside of God and His love. Hence the resolve never to abandon Him again: "I found him whom my soul loveth: I held him, and I will not let him go, till I bring him into my mother's house" (C. C. 3:4).

All obstacles being removed by the second passive purgation, the soul is now ready for the supreme mystical union, the spiritual marriage. "Go forth, ye daughters of Sion, and see king Solomon in the diadem, wherewith his mother crowned him in the day of his espousals, and in the day of the joy of his heart" (C. C. 3:11).

The divine grace and the gifts of the holy Spirit have adorned the soul for the solemn occasion: "The fountain of gardens: the well of living waters, which run with a strong stream from Libanus. Arise, o north wind, and come, south wind, blow through my garden, and let the aromatical spices thereof flow" (C. C. 4:15-16). How similar in its spiritual meaning is the last verse to the well known prayer: *Veni, Sancte Spiritus, reple tuorum corde fidelium*, etc. The *living waters* are divine grace, the *wind* symbolises the Holy Spirit.

The fifth chapter of Canticle opens with an allegorical description of the transforming union or mystical marriage: "Let my beloved come into his garden, and eat the fruit of his apple trees. I am come into my garden, O *my* sister, *my* spouse. I have gathered my myrrh, with my aramatical spices: I have eaten the honeycomb with my honey. I have drunk my wine with my milk" (C. C. 5:1). The effect of the mystical marriage is a permanent union that nothing can disturb, nothing can interrupt, a union experienced even during natural sleep, as was the case with several mystics: "I sleep, and my heart watcheth" (C. C. 5:2). From now on, the soul knows all the secrets of her beloved and is able to describe him (C. C. 5:10-16). Her happiness is now complete and her life is hidden in God: "I to my beloved and my beloved to me, who feedeth among lilies" (C. C. 6:2).

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THE FORM-CRITICS, THE GOSPEL, AND ST. PAUL

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There was a time when the critical battle over the traditional belief that the Gospels were written by Apostles or disciples named Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John was waged with simple directness. Rationalistic critics found evidence which forced them to assign the Gospels to other individuals or to conclude that the accounts of these individuals had been tampered with or that the individual authors for one reason or other could not be relied upon. And Catholic scholars labored, as they labor today, to collect the proofs that to the Gospels could be attributed the qualities of genuinity, integrity, and credibility. The Gospels, according to them, could be established as coming from the period to which tradition had assigned them, and as being without substantial modification, the work of men whose knowledge and veracity could not be questioned.

It was left for scholars of our own day (more precisely, of the past twenty years) to discover that the whole discussion had gotten off on the wrong foot. Headway could be made only when all realized that the Gospels are not the creations of individual writers, but that the true authors are the early Christian communities. Thus we are told:

Inquiry into the historicity of the Gospels used to be made dependent upon the solution of the question of authenticity, and so attempted to establish the relation of the authors to the eyewitnesses in order to prove how much the evangelists could have known or learned of the real course of things. These inquiries would have led on to a wrong road, even if they had not been burdened with the old question of uncertain authorship, for the very statement of the question upon which they stand is too much of a literary and personal character. The authors of the Gospels, at least of the synoptics, are not "authors" in the literary sense, but collectors.¹

In fact, as Prof. Dibelius admits in this same place, the more clearly we can cut through the links forged by the Evangelists to bind together individual units of tradition the greater will be the historical trustworthiness of the narrative.

To whom then are we to assign the discovery of this new point of departure? F. V. Filson² in outlining the genesis of the school

¹ Martin Dibelius, *From Tradition to Gospel*, pp. 59-60, translated from the second revised edition of *Die Formgeschichte des Evangeliums* by B. L. Woolf (Scribner's, 1935).

² Floyd V. Filson, *Origins of the Gospels* (New York: Abingdon Press,

of Form-criticism remarks that it had been foreshadowed by the work of such scholars as Julius Wellhausen and Johannes Weiss. But the movement first caught the attention of scholars in the presentation of three authors. In 1919 Professor Dibelius of Heidelberg published *Die Formgeschichte des Evangeliums*, the second edition of which was translated into English in 1935 under the title *From Tradition to Gospel*. Karl L. Schmidt also published an important book in this field in 1919. It was entitled *Der Rahmen der Geschichte Jesu* (The Framework of the History of Jesus). The third important work which brought this method into prominence was Rudolf Bultmann's *Die Geschichte der Synoptischen Tradition* (The History of the Synoptic Tradition), published in 1921 and revised in 1931. The work of these three men may fairly be said to have started the movement which has been taken up with enthusiasm by many New Testaments scholars in England and America.³

Though the Form-critics possess characteristics which set them off from older critical schools, it would be very misleading to consider them altogether independent of the critical investigations of the past two centuries. The truth is rather that literary criticism hitherto engaged with the Synoptic Question had reached a point in its investigation analogous to that reached by the physical sciences when they found in atoms the elemental substances and had arranged and charted them. As these sciences were carried almost necessarily into a new phase of investigation in which they set themselves to smash the atom, so New Testament criticism, having agreed that in the Two-Document Theory it had arrived at basic elements, quite naturally, in the unfortunate absence of texts of Q, began breaking down the unity of Mark. And the bewildering array of protons, electrons, neutrons, positrons that constitute the simple and ultimate physical reality is not more amazing than the heterogeneous complex held together by the Gospel framework which the Evangelist supplies.

Literary criticism, then, before the rise of Form-criticism had not concerned itself directly with the preliminary material out of which Mark was assembled. Little interest was taken in the

1938), pp. 89-90. A fine bibliography of Form-criticism literature can be found in Filson's article "Books on the Message" in the May 1942 (Vol. X, no. 2) issue of *The Journal of Bible and Religion*, pp. 93-97.

³ The second revised edition of Bultmann's work *Die Geschichte der synoptischen Tradition* is published by Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, Göttingen, 1931.

nature of the narratives and sayings in the period preceding the Gospel composition. What facts and influences may have been at work in their formation and transmission—that was a question of less moment in earlier studies. Nor did they discuss at any length what has become for Form-criticism the most important matter of all, the part the community or communities played in the production of the material which lay ready to hand when the editors of the Gospels set to work.

Up to World War I Bible criticism had largely been literary criticism; the actual text of the Gospels had been the material on which scholars worked, and many of them had arrived by such studies at definite conclusions, especially the priority of the Gospel of St. Mark over those of St. Matthew and St. Luke, and they were pretty well in agreement on the existence of a body of sayings or *Logia* from which presumably Matthew and Luke had drawn a considerable portion of their non-Markan material.⁴ It was to this hypothetical collection that they assigned the symbol Q. About the time of the first World War, however, it was felt that a new, a larger, a more speculative and conjectural study must be undertaken. For at this time, as E. Basil Redlich⁵ points out, the historical value of Mark began to be questioned. Scholars began to see in him the influence of theological views of the early Church, of pieces of a later date, even bits of legendary matter.

How then was the Gospel of Mark put together? The answer to this question necessarily takes us into the period before the Gospels, back into the two or three decades that followed Christ's Resurrection, back into a period for which we have very little written evidence. No one can deny that any attempt to study the years that followed the close of Christ's career is handicapped at every step by lack of documentary evidence and endangered by the absence of historical checks against subjective interpretation and analysis. F. V. Filson⁶ affirms that, while the first two decades of the Church are the period of special interest, it is a

⁴ For clear schematic diagrams of several theories of synoptic interdependence, the reader can profitably consult Dom John Chapman's *Matthew Mark and Luke: A Study in the Order and Interrelation of the Synoptic Gospels* (London: Longmans, Green & Co., 1937), pp. xxiv-xxv.

⁵ E. Basil Redlich, *Form Criticism, Its Value and Limitations* (London: Duckworth, 1939), p. 24.

⁶ Filson, *Origins of the Gospels*, p. 91.

difficult period to study for we have no written records from it. And it is the period of special interest because it is the important one in the history of the Gospel tradition. For upon the handling of the tradition in those years the credibility of our Gospels depends: if the material was carefully preserved we can trust it; if it was not subject to careful control but was allowed to fade amid the fanciful creations of minds devoid of historical sense, then we cannot trust it.

What, then, did go on during the years that immediately followed the Ascension? Let us follow here the assumptions made by the Form-critics, without at this point attempting any evaluation of them.⁷ The first of these assumptions is that before our Gospels and before all written source-matter of the Gospels, whatever it may have been, there was a period of *oral tradition*. It is a marked characteristic of the school to stress this early transmission. Concerning it Karl L. Schmidt⁸ writes:

In the earliest times the stories of the history of Jesus were passed from mouth to mouth. When the Christians came together, they took turns in telling one another about the words and deeds of the Lord, one supplementing the tale of another. And though the Bible of the Jews was the holy book in their gatherings for divine service, still, even in the earliest times, everything that could be told about Jesus played a significant part. We have no definite knowledge about this. However we cannot picture too vividly this discussion and narration concerning the history of Jesus within the circle where these narratives were related, in the heart of the cult-group. . . . One story after another concerning Jesus was lined up in oral tradition in a natural spontaneous manner. When one had ceased giving his account, another continued "And it happened that . . ."⁹

The *second* assumption, one that is implied in Schmidt's reconstruction of the early Christian meetings, is that the material of tradition, i.e., Christ's words and deeds, circulated from mouth to mouth mainly as individual, independent units in "forms," which can even yet be recognized and restored. In this second assertion we approach the vital core of the theory. And it is from this assertion of the transmission of the Gospel mate-

⁷ For the arrangement of the assumptions of Form-criticism I am indebted to Redlich, *Form Criticism, Its Value and Limitations*, pp. 34-75.

⁸ *Der Rahmen der Geschichte Jesu* (Berlin: Trowitzsch und Sohn, 1919), p. 19.

⁹ Unless other indication is given the translations are those of the author of the present article.

rial in "forms" that the school¹⁰ takes its name. What, then, are those "forms" whose history we can trace? Perhaps the best way to begin the answer is to catalogue some of the forms recognized by Professors Dibelius and Bultmann.

Dibelius¹¹ lists *Paradigms*, defined by Bertram Lee Woolf as "short illustrative notices or stories of an event, not more descriptive than is necessary to make the point for the sake of which it is introduced";¹² *Novellen* or *Tales*, "stories told primarily for their own sake"¹²; *Sayings*, *Legends*, and *Myths*. Bultmann¹³ mentions *Apotheogms* (practically the same as Dibelius' *Paradigms*); *Sayings* (subdivided into Wisdom Words, 'I' Words, Prophetic and Apocalyptic Words, Law Words and Community Rules, Parables); *Miracle-Stories*; and *Legends*.

The "forms" are, then, those general classifications, categories, groupings, into which we can fit more or less neatly all the Gospel material. It is fairly evident even to the quite unscholarly reader of the Gospel of St. Mark that there are related a number of incidents from Christ's life. Evident, too, that these incidents for the most part report either a saying or teaching of His, a deed of power or miracle, or some combination in which the miracle enforces some teaching, introduces a teaching or discussion with adversaries, and so on. In other words, we can *classify* the Gospel incidents; we can recognize, too, that at one time a miracle will be related in connection with a discussion out of which it grows or to which it gives rise, but in such a way that our attention is not particularly focussed upon the miraculous element, and we recognize that at another time a miracle will be related with greater richness of detail, so that it holds the center of the stage. Whether there is a sharp cleavage between these two types of narration or whether there can be traced an almost imperceptible transition from one to the other, is not a question

¹⁰ I do not mean to convey the impression that the various scholars who favor and have advanced this theory known as *Formgeschichte* are as closely united in purpose, method, conclusions as the word "school" may imply. But it is a convenient way of referring to a number of men who represent a critical trend that does exhibit some important common characteristics.

¹¹ One may consult the Table of Contents (p. iv) of his *Die Formgeschichte des Evangeliums*, in which these forms are listed as chapter headings.

¹² Woolf, *From Tradition to Gospel*, p. xv.

¹³ Page of Contents of *Die Geschichte der syn. Tradition*.

which can be discussed here in the general survey of the *Formgeschichte* position.¹⁴ Let us only remark that in judging a system which insists on classification by *form*, any considerable amount of formless matter, or matter possessing characteristics of several "forms," should raise definite uneasiness in our minds.

But the true significance of the method we are studying lies in the explanation of the manner in which the "forms" arose and were preserved during the oral period. It is in this explanation that for the Form-critics their chief merit rests. Their third and last assumption then may thus be formulated: the vital factors which gave rise to the "forms" and preserved them are to be found in the practical interests of the Christian community.¹⁵ Dibelius indicates the importance of this last assumption when he says: "The right to read the Gospels from the standpoint of the development of their form is the objective of the present volume."¹⁶

Briefly put, through constant repetition in the early days the Christian communities fixed the Gospel material and the Gospel tradition by giving it the *form* or *forms* it now possesses. And since this process was very similar to that which we find in the development of folklore and popular saga and narrative, Form-critics seek to find in these literary genres the true parallels to the Gospels.¹⁷ Not content with this, however, *Formgeschichte* goes on to show the practical interests within the communities that determined both form and content. For the ultimate origin of the *Form* is the primitive Christian life itself.¹⁸ To understand the formation of the Gospel tradition we must seek its *Sitz im Leben*, its life-setting, the historical and social stratum in which the forms were developed, the sociological relationships,¹⁹

¹⁴ Rev. John J. Collins, S.J., in his study "Form Criticism and the Synoptic Gospels," *Theological Studies* (Sept. 1941, p. 396), gives a short but pointed refutation, based on this 'formlessness' of the Gospel material, to the assertion that all or most of the Gospel material can be classified. Cf., Redlich, *op. cit.*, p. 55.

¹⁵ E. B. Redlich, *op. cit.*, p. 55.

¹⁶ Woolf, *op. cit.*, p. 6.

¹⁷ The reader may substantiate this by perusing Chapter VI, "Analogies" in *From Tradition to Gospel*, and pages 83-96 of Chapter IV, "Tales," where among other conclusions he will find that the sigh (reported in the healing of the deaf and dumb man, Mk. 7:34) belongs to the technique of mystical magic."

¹⁸ Woolf, *op. cit.*, p. 8.

¹⁹ Dibelius, *Die Formgeschichte des Evangeliums*, p. 9.

which are composed of the conditions and activities of life of the first Christian churches. It is not enough to know that material was repeated and handed down by the early Christian communities, we want to know and can find out by a careful study of the *Sitz im Leben* why that material was preserved and handed down. It is not historical or biographical interest that accounts for the transmission of this material, but the usage, the needs, the life of the Church itself. F. V. Filson²⁰ brings under four headings the needs or practical interests of the Church, the factors that make up the *Sitz im Leben* of the early communities. The Church needed, first, *guidance* in belief and conduct. She needed also *instructions* for inquirers and converts to meet the inevitable questions about Christian doctrine and about the character of their Leader and Founder. Again, for *worship* they needed sayings, teachings, stories as a basis for their specifically Christian worship. Finally, for purposes of *controversy* both within and without they needed ammunition. The early Christians had to be in a position to give an account of the Faith they held when confronted with opposition and criticism, objections, and slanders. Form-critics contend that it is Jesus' own sayings and deeds which gave them their best weapons in such encounters. As need arose—whether for guidance, for instruction, for worship, or for controversy—the churches employed single and separate incidents. The choice depended upon the exigencies of the moment and the incident from the life of Jesus took on an existence and an importance which it would not have had in the biographical stream of events.

And in this separate handling of episodes, not only did repetition tend to give a fixed form, but also there ensued the inevitable shaping of historical data due to the apologetic, ethical, controversial end which those who recounted the episode had in view. Thus Dibelius²¹ writes on the passage concerning the message from John the Baptist:²²

What did the Evangelist mean when he introduced this series of incidents with the inquiry made by John the Baptist from his prison? In order to understand the Evangelist's motive we must realize that in the period of Matthew there were apparently some groups who

²⁰ Filson, *op. cit.*, pp. 95-98.

²¹ Martin Dibelius, *The Sermon on the Mount* (New York: Scribner's, 1940), pp. 17-18.

²² Mt. 11:2ff.

claimed that John the Baptist, not Jesus, was the Messiah. Matthew arranged his subject matter in the order indicated because the pericope provided the Christians with material which they could use in their disputations with the Baptist's followers. We can still feel the Evangelist's intentions. He wanted to help the communities in some way. He wanted to advise the Christians how to bear witness for their faith against the disciples of John the Baptist.

The Gospels are, then, apart from the editorial framework (the *Rahmen*) a sociological result. The style, which characterizes the categories, is quite independent of individual personality. And to understand both style and category we must inquire into the social life and customs of worship. We shall then know what categories are possible or probable. Ultimately then the *Sitz im Leben* is the basic cause and the main constituent of the Gospel material.

Such are the tenets and assumptions of Form-criticism. What are its method and contributions? Its method which is still best studied in Fascher's work, *Die Formgeschichtliche Methode*,²³ is first to break or untie the string that holds together the individual beads of tradition, thus removing the *Rahmen* supplied by the collectors and redactors. In the treatment of the units that are left after the framework is gone there are several methods of approach. As Fascher remarks:

Reasoning from the form of the narrative, we can conclude to its practical use on the supposition that the practical use produced the form. Conversely, we can make the practical use responsible for the development of the form. From the form we may conclude to the use; from the use to the form. Two points of view dovetail in Dibelius' approach: (1) an historical-constructive point of view which indicates an historical motive for the origin of the small individual pieces; (2) a literary-stylistic approach which endeavors to separate individual literary groups on the basis of stylistic peculiarities.²⁴

If, then, this method is correct, the first great contribution should be "to give a picture of the history of the individual pieces of tradition"²⁵ or "to reconstruct the formation and history of these individual pieces and so make clear the history of the pre-

²³ Eric Fascher, *Die Formgeschichtliche Methode* (Giesen: Töpelmann, 1924).

²⁴ Cf. Fascher's work for a detailed study of the advantages and disadvantages of these approaches which are complementary in the minds of Form-critics. For a further statement that these two methods complete and correct each other, cf. Bultmann, *Die Geschichte der synoptischen Tradition*, pp. 5-6.

²⁵ Bultmann, *op. cit.*, p. 4

literary tradition.”²⁶ Thus the Gospels open to us a rich mine of information about the life, the activities, the interests, the difficulties, the gradual growth and development of the years from 35 A.D. to the end of the Apostolic age. It is a commonplace with Form-critics that *Klein-literatur*²⁷ will reflect, primarily and directly, the mind and manners of the groups which formulate it and secondarily, and rather by inference, the life and thought and customs of the period it proposes to treat. The understanding of this conclusion is, I think, all-important. The whole significance of the *Sitz im Leben* conception is missed if one does not understand that the Synoptic Gospels are a cross-section first and foremost of their own sociological stratum. And they become more or less historically significant, not as they give us more or less accurately the teachings and the actions of Jesus of Nazareth, but as they give more or less completely the best and most representative features of the Christian faith and life during the period in which their material crystallized. Professor Dibelius²⁸ assures us that just because they serve the purpose of preaching, these stories could not be told in a “neutral” fashion; they must meet the requirements of the hearer, they must support and prove the message. Colorless records, we are told, would be altogether doubtful,²⁹ while the tints of style which

²⁶ Bultmann, *op. cit.*, p. 4, quotes this from an article of Dibelius in the *Theologische Rundschau*, N. F., 1 (1929), p. 187.

²⁷ Dibelius in *Die Formgeschichte des Evangeliums* (p. 1) tells us that by *Kleinliteratur* he understands that lower stratum which does not partake of the artistic methods nor tendencies of literary and artistic writing. Though intended for a public, it is not concerned with them in the way that formal literature is. This type, he tells us, is found in circles not reached ordinarily by great literature.

²⁸ Woolf, *op. cit.*, p. 62.

²⁹ For colorless, i.e., sober historical accounts of profoundly significant events are out of the question. This attitude which prompts modern scholars almost without exception to distrust the ability of human beings to report significant events objectively is found even in a moderate and thoughtful scholar like Prof. Albright. In his *From the Stone Age to Christianity*, after calling attention to the difference between the Gospel contents and typical matter long transmitted by oral tradition, he goes on: “What we have in them (the Gospels) is rather a reflection of reports of eye-witnesses who were overwhelmed by the profound experiences and the extreme tension of mind and body through which they had passed. Men who see the boundary between conventional experience and the transcendental world dissolving before their very eyes are not going to distinguish clearly between things seen in the plane of nature and things seen in the world of spirit” (p. 300). It seems to me that to speak thus broadly

are due to the fact that the Paradigms were intended for edificatory preaching, though excluding complete objectivity, show that at least we have hold of an "old and relatively good" tradition. The Form-critic, in other words, offers us in place of an objective history—that phantom pot-of-gold at the end of the rainbow—the attainable reality of the Christian conception of Christ before the Gospels were written. Why should we wistfully pine for impossible treasures when we can stretch out our hands to riches that are within our grasp? In a word, let us say openly and boldly with Bultmann,³⁰ "we can know almost nothing concerning the

about "overwhelming experiences" and "extreme tension of mind and body" is to overlook the distinction between various kinds of significant religious experience. Christian literature of all ages has distinguished truly mystical experiences like that of Paul when he heard words which it is not permitted men to utter (2 Cor. 12:5) and that of the Apostles, who report that with a certain number of loaves Christ fed a certain number of people and that there remained a certain number of baskets of fragments. That there was in the first case an overwhelming experience accompanied by extreme tension of mind and body may well be true; and had Paul undertaken to recount the ineffable experience of that mystical state, we should have to apply appropriate norms; but to claim that there is any such tension in the second case is tantamount to saying that the objective reporting of extremely momentous events is as least so improbable that no one of them can ever be accepted, since men "who see the boundary between conventional experience and the transcendental world dissolving before their very eyes are not going to distinguish clearly between things seen in the plane of nature and things seen in the world of spirit." However refined this may be, it is still sheer scepticism. It is also the end of Christianity, for as Fr. McClellan notes in his review (*Theological Studies*, III, 1, Feb. 1942, p. 130) of Albright's work, "the Christian faith deals primarily with facts of tremendous moment, precisely because it consists in accepting the report of these facts as literally correct. . . . Their spiritual value lies wholly in their objective reality."

³⁰ I am aware that Bultmann is regarded as more radical than many other Form-critics. But I am also inclined to believe that it is quite possible that he is really only more honest and thorough in his applications of the essential principles of the group to which he belongs. In passing, it would be unfair not to advise the reader regarding the passage quoted above (*Jesus and the Word*, translated by Louise Pettibone Smith and Erminie Huntress from the second 1934 edition of the German work *Jesus* by Rudolf Bultmann, pp. viii-ix) of the illuminating caution of the translators: "We venture to suggest that the reader should not allow himself to be unduly disturbed by the purely negative element in the book. Prof. Bultmann uses 'know' and 'certain' in almost an absolute sense; consequently he is forced to use 'probably' where most of us say 'certainly,' and 'possibly' stands often for 'probably.'"

life and personality of Jesus, since the early Christian sources show no interest in either, are moreover fragmentary and often legendary; and other sources about Jesus do not exist." Or with Dibelius,³¹ "Consequently we must conclude that all original knowledge of the historical order of events in the life of Jesus was lost in the early communities," or again,³² "modern New Testament scholars have come to the conclusion that the first communities were not interested in chronology at all." The best we can hope for is a statement such as this:

I am not convinced that the meaning of Jesus' words, especially the Sermon on the Mount, was seriously falsified by such insertions (i.e., non-authentic elements either connected with the original sayings or suited to illustrate the authentic words), and the general impression made by our investigation is a favorable one.³³

Filson³⁴ recognizes the sceptical tendency involved in the theory and admits that it may go so far as to deny practically if not theoretically that we have any dependable data left in which to preserve the historical Jesus.

If this picture of the origin and development of the individual pieces of tradition out of the very life and activity of the primitive communities is the first contribution of Form-criticism, the second will be a picture of the work of the Evangelists. Theirs it was to stitch together the various pericopae into a continuous account. Fortunately the needle work is sufficiently clumsy in almost every instance to permit easy detection of the threads that run through the Gospel-narrative. Thus we can free again the individual sections and set them out of their original independence and self-sufficiency. And Form-critics seem to be agreed that this editorial framework rarely reflects actual historical sequence. Karl L. Schmidt's *Der Rahmen der Geschichte Jesu* is from first to last an effort to discount all chronological and topographical data.³⁵ The Evangelists offer us, then, no per-

³¹ Dibelius, *The Sermon on the Mount*, p. 14.

³² Dibelius, *ibid.*, p. 13.

³³ Dibelius, *ibid.*, p. 43.

³⁴ Filson, *op. cit.*, p. 100.

³⁵ One may consult the conclusion of the work cited (p. 317): "Only occasionally will we be able by consideration of the internal nature of a narrative to fix it somewhat more precisely in time and place. But on the whole there is no Life of Jesus in the sense of an evolved life-history, no chronological sketch, but only single incidents, pericopes, which are placed within a framework."

sonal guarantee for what they write; they are only the compilers of what the various communities preserve and in the course of transmission have brought more or less to a fixed account.

So much in a general way for the theory, the assumptions, the methods and contributions of Form-criticism. The present article is solely concerned with the picture of the early Christian communities drawn for us implicitly and explicitly in the works of Form-critics. We have already seen that in this theory the practical interests of the primitive communities are the vital factors in the development of the *forms*, for "the ultimate origin of the *form* is the primitive Christian life itself."³⁶ And Form-critics by turns argue from *forms* to community interests, conditions, attitudes, and from these to the *Forms* which they would naturally produce, the two processes constantly and mutually completing and correcting each other. My intention is to catalogue under several headings the principal features of this early Christian community as reconstructed by the method being studied, and then by applying an independent control to judge the accuracy of the Form-critics' reconstruction. The Form-critics' conception of the primitive Church is to be gathered from indications in the works of Dibelius, Bultmann, Schmidt, Filson, F. C. Grant and others who can be trusted to be representative of this school of thought. The second step will be to present the Christian community or communities as St. Paul knew them and as he pictures them to us in the earliest Christian writings.³⁷ We shall then be in a position to compare the communities reconstructed by Form-criticism and the communities addressed by St. Paul, and if we find important discrepancies in the two presentations we may feel ourselves entitled to draw certain significant conclusions.

There are, then, it seems to me, five qualities which are in the minds of Form-critics determinant factors in the shaping of the gospel before the Gospels and which we can readily isolate and catalogue. And I believe that these five will embrace all the important forces that came into play in the development of the real tradition basic to the synoptic Gospels. The early Christian communities were then: 1) eschatological in thought and outlook, 2) uncontrolled and democratic, 3) in search of laws of living in the words and deeds of Jesus, 4) creative, 5) autonomous.

³⁶ Woolf, *op. cit.*, p. 8.

³⁷ I here transmit the question of the date of the Synoptic Gospels.

That the early Christian communities were dominated by eschatological views, that is, that they anticipated and eagerly awaited a speedy consummation of the present economy of things with the coming of the Kingdom in apocalyptic splendor is a commonplace with the adherents of Form-criticism. Vincent Taylor³⁸ tells us, in explaining the lack of biographical interest among the early Christians, that "their eyes were on the New Heaven and New Earth which they believed Christ would soon bring. They did not know that nineteen centuries later we should still lack the consummation: nothing would have astonished them more. Their hopes were on the future: what need was there to record the past." So too E. Basil Redlich³⁹ assumes the conviction even though he questions its influence, when he says in listing the limitations of Form-criticism: "Form Criticism by too great an emphasis on the expected Parousia has lost sight of the normal life which men lived, though the Parousia was held to be imminent."

M. Dibelius is no less certain of the eschatological proclivities of the Christian communities:⁴⁰ "A community of unliturgical men, who expect the end of the world today or tomorrow, has neither the capacity nor the inclination to produce books. Consequently, we shall not venture to credit to the Christian communities of the first two or three decades a true literary activity." Again a moment later Dibelius reminds us that they were "men full of faith in the future," anticipating "the Coming, of which they were certain and which they expected to be just around the corner (*in nächster Zukunft*)." And so far as concern about the future goes, "such a concern is foreign to men who lived in expectation of the end itself."⁴¹

That this idea of an early consummation was not confined to any one group of early communities, Bultmann⁴² assures us when he writes:

³⁸ Vincent Taylor, *The Formation of the Gospel Tradition* (London: Macmillan, 1933), p. 145.

³⁹ Redlich, *op. cit.*, p. 79.

⁴⁰ *Die Formgeschichte des Evangeliums*, 2 Auflage, p. 9.

⁴¹ Woolf, *op. cit.*, p. 13.

⁴² Rudolf Bultmann, *The Study of the Synoptic Gospels* (translated by Frederick C. Grant from the German *Die Erforschung der synoptischen Evangelien*, and included in the work *Form Criticism A New Method of New Testament Research* by F. C. Grant (Chicago: Willett, Clark & Co., 1934), p. 17.

For the Palestinian-Jewish Christians Jesus was the Messiah, whose return as the Son of Man they ardently expected; while for the Hellenistic-Gentile Christians Jesus was primarily the Lord whom they worshipped in their common cult, whose presence they experienced in the activities of the Spirit. Even though these believers were also under the influence of the 'eschatological' tension (that is, they expected the immediate end of the world and the arrival of the Kingdom of God and the Reign of the Messias), it was the present exalted Lord who stood in their midst.

As the opinions which we have cited show, these expectations operated in every case to produce a great carelessness about the actual sequence of events in the past.⁴³ And when we take together the early Christian's exclusive concern with the Parousia and his absolute disregard of past historical sequence, we would seem to be at a loss to account for the activity of the early communities and their zealous spreading of their recollections of the immediate past. Dibelius⁴⁴ seeks to resolve the difficulty by establishing the *motive* which caused the spreading of the reminiscences, though the feelings and desires of the people were directed towards the future. And he is ready to confess that "if there was no such motive, then it is quite impossible to understand how men who made no pretensions to literature could create a tradition which constituted the first steps of the literary production which was even then coming into being." This motive Dibelius finds in the "*Mission*," the missionary purpose, though he makes it by no means clear whether the missionary purpose was operative from the very beginning or not. If it was, then it becomes very hard to see how the Christians, try as they might, could lose practically all contact with objective historical reality; if it was not, then Professor Dibelius owes us a far more complete study to show when and why the missionary purpose arose. Nor is it made clear whether "missionary purpose" fixed their interest in past events, without distracting them from their exclusive concern with the future, or whether the very motive which caused them to look to the past released them from the eschatological tension of which Bultmann speaks.

Secondly, the Form-critics appear to assume that the early Christian communities were *uncontrolled* and *democratic*. We have here a point which, I think, is more tacitly accepted than

⁴³ A. W. F. Blunt, *The Gospel and the Critic* (London: Oxford U. Press, 1936), p. 58.

⁴⁴ Woolf, *op. cit.*, p. 11.

explicitly stated and proved. The evidence is rather privative than positive: there is no mention in the works of Form-critics of rulers or control or hierarchic organization, where it would be expected if Form-critics admitted the existence of rulers and organizations. We hear much of missionaries, preachers, teachers, but almost nothing of authority, *episcopi*, *presbyteri*. Again, the assertion of Form-critics that the communities sought their laws of life and conduct in the words and deeds of Jesus presupposes an absence of recognized authorities who by reason of appointment and office could and did decide questions of cult, creed, and code, without necessarily citing chapter and verse.

Dibelius⁴⁵ assures us that "the tradition contained in the Gospels may be regarded as relatively good, not because it is connected with Peter or any other Apostle, but because of its still vital connection with the mission." And Redlich explains the procedure of the Antiochene church in getting over its difficulties:⁴⁶ "In Q, which is a collection of our Lord's sayings, we find answers to questions which were the immediate concern of the early Christian church at Antioch. . . . The whole contents of Q give our Lord's guidance on the varied needs of the Antiochene church."⁴⁷ Certainly in Antioch there was no need of governors, since literacy was all that was needed that the individual Christians should find more than enough guidance.

Redlich⁴⁸ again counts it one of the contributions of Form-criticism that by admitting that certain collections of sayings were made early it has pointed to the possibility that the *ipsisima verba* of our Lord was treasured as oracles to guide and control the destinies of the individual and of the Church. Here again we find nothing expressly stated about the presence or absence of rulers of the Christian communities, but one does feel that the general tenor of the description given by Form-critics is certainly not that of "Visum est enim Spiritui Sancto et nobis nihil ultra *imponere vobis* quam haec necessaria: ut absteineatis

⁴⁵ M. Dibelius, *Gospel Criticism and Christology* (London: Nicholson & Watson, 1935), p. 83.

⁴⁶ Redlich, *op. cit.*, pp. 56-57.

⁴⁷ I cannot help remarking that given the present state of the MSS of Q and our knowledge of the specific problems that confronted the Antiochene church, Redlich's diagnosis of the contents of Q is not characterized by excessive caution.

⁴⁸ Redlich, *op. cit.*, pp. 79-80.

vos ab immolatis simulachrorum et sanguine et suffocato et fornicatione a quibus custodientes vos bene agetis,"⁴⁹ where it is notable that the Antiochene church has its difficulties settled for it not by any cento of sayings of Christ already known or fortuitously recalled but by the transmission of an apostolic ordination.

There are in this connection two citations from Dibelius that we cannot afford to omit. In the *Sermon on the Mount* he tells us that "The first Christian communities, let us say about 50 A.D., required a summary of the Lord's teachings in order to have rules of conduct for their own life,"⁵⁰ and a little later,⁵¹

It seems highly probable that they originate in a similar way. The Christians needed rules to govern their lives before the end of the world, rules not only for individual conduct but also for the social life within the communities. For this reason they collected the sayings and parables of Jesus, adapting them when necessary to their own circumstances.

I think that, without laboring the point further, it is clear from the citations already given that it is correct to say not only that there is no sign in the *Formgeschichtliche* literature of hierarchic organization, but that positively the sole source of the norms of Christian life and thought were the deeds and words of Jesus. Thus the third characteristic which we isolated in enumerating the qualities of the community (that according to Form-critics the Christian communities sought their laws of living in the deeds and words of Jesus) is sufficiently established without giving it further individual treatment.

But to come to the fourth quality—in their appeal to Jesus, how did the primitive communities conduct themselves? Were they scrupulously disinterested, painstakingly objective in sifting reports of what Jesus had said and done? Did they have a clear grasp of sound historical principles in separating the authentic reports from the fly-by-night rumors that might be circulating amongst them? To these questions Form-criticism's answer appears to contain two elements: first, the Christian communities set no store by eyewitnesses, and secondly, without any deliberate intention of falsifying, they were not beyond adding to the stories they had received or shifting the emphasis and modifying the

⁴⁹ Acts, 15:28,29.

⁵⁰ *The Sermon on the Mount*, p. 28.

⁵¹ *Ibid.*, p. 34.

import of older material. In short, the Christian communities were *creative*.

The evidence for these two assertions meets one on all sides in the literature of Form-criticism. So far as eyewitnesses are concerned, we have already seen that eschatological leanings left the Christian neither time nor interest for chronological detail. In his work on the Sermon on the Mount, Dibelius⁵² writes: "We must conclude that all original knowledge of the historical order of events in the life of Jesus was lost in the early communities." And Blunt⁵³ admits in speaking of the method of the Form-critics that the further question of the relation of tradition to history arises and that some of the Form-critics are very sceptical on this point. They are prepared to say that the tradition was formed with very little reference to history.

The oft-quoted conclusion of Lightfoot's study represents accurately the tendency and conclusions of those who follow the method here being studied. "For all the inestimable value of the Gospels, they yield us little more than a whisper of his voice, we trace in them but the outskirts of his ways."⁵⁴ For those, then, who accept the general position adopted in this new method it is a matter of secondary importance who were the actual writers of the Gospels or what access they were likely to have to authoritative sources of information, in comparison with the question whether the Gospels proceed from centers which were of importance in the life of early Christianity.

The Form-critic is not content, however, with the position that the community had no interest in preserving accurate historical material. He insists further that the material which came its way was re-fused and reshaped depending on the needs of the community. The tradition which the Evangelists took over is not so much a loose combination of historical and unhistorical elements, in which the judicious student must learn to reject spurious accretions, but the individual sections are living progeny of a creative community impregnated by historical material. And while the clumsy connective tissue⁵⁵ of the Evangelists can

⁵² *Ibid.*, p. 14.

⁵³ *Op. cit.*, p. 55.

⁵⁴ R. H. Lightfoot, *History and Interpretation in the Gospels*, The Bampton Lectures, 1934 (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1935), p. 225.

⁵⁵ What we understand by "connective tissue" is well described in the Introduction (pp. xvii-xxii) of *The Mission and Message of Jesus* by

easily be detected and in most cases neatly removed, no man can tell the exact extent of the community influence, for while the Evangelist combined in an external and artificial manner, the community fused original historical data with its own aspirations, concerns, and outlook in a very natural way. The result is that frequently the individual beads are so deftly fashioned that one cannot strip off an outer layer of accretion and lay bare the original historical nucleus.

The primitive Christian leaders skilfully fashioned some of these beads to satisfy the curiosity and devotional and practical needs of the members of the primitive Christian communities. Other beads they fashioned to meet their own apologetic needs in their work of propaganda which brought them into conflict with Jewish and pagan opponents.⁵⁶

I do not wish to deny that Form-critics can now and then see rather clearly traces of creative community modification. And it may be well to cite a few examples adduced by Form-critics so that we may more clearly grasp the process that was going on throughout the whole expanse of biographical data about Christ in the first decades after the Ascension. From these examples the reader will be able to see how irresponsible a creative community can be, or rather how we are at fault in expecting a creative community to handle an originally historical incident after the manner of a professional and conscientious chronicler.

In *The Sermon on the Mount*, Dibelius⁵⁷ lays bare the creative activity of the community in discussing the exception which we find in Matthew to the absolute denial of divorce which we find in the original wording of the sentence in Mark, "What God has joined, then, man may not separate." Dibelius counsels us that in trying to understand the reason for the change:

We may imagine a situation where a pagan wife of a Christian has a lover, and it consequently becomes impossible for the Christian husband and for the Christian community to tolerate this situation.

H. D. A. Major, T. W. Manson, and C. J. Wright (New York: Dutton, 1938): "The strings upon which they (the beads) are strung consist of the chronological succession of these incidents which is interwoven with their localisation, which consists not merely of the geographical localities associated with incidents and sayings but is supplemented by such further information as 'on the road,' 'in the boat' (no doubt Peter's), 'in the house' (also Peter's), 'in the mountain,' 'on the beach,' 'in the synagogue' " (pp. xxxi, 966).

⁵⁶ Major-Manson-Wright, *The Mission and Message of Jesus*, p. xxxi.

⁵⁷ Pp. 18-19.

This, or some situation like this, may be what determined the Matthean wording of the sayings and required the exception which it makes in the case of unchastity. This situation was possible only at an advanced period in the life of the Church when the Christian communities included men and women of the well-to-do classes.⁵⁸

Another instance in which Form-critics claim that we can see the community at work is that of Jesus' answer to those who tell Him (Mk. 3:31-35) that His mother and brethren are looking for Him. Here Form-critics are agreed that all that Jesus Himself said was, "These are my mother and my brothers" and that the further generalization by which the saying could be made directly applicable in other cases, "For whoever does the will of God, he is my brother and sister and mother," is the work of the preaching community, who by this modification turned an isolated incident into a Paradigm.

A third pericope in which the community activity is violent enough to allow itself to be discovered and analyzed is the story of the woman with the alabaster box. Here it is evident that Jesus praises the deed simply as a good work, as a good work equivalent to the good work that would have been contained in giving the price of the ointment in alms, and that in this praise

⁵⁸ There are several things to be noted about this first instance cited. First, an age-old tradition of the Roman Catholic Church denies that in the passage of Matthew an exception is made to the clear teaching of Christ on complete severance of the bond; the Catholic Church has seen in the words rather the permission for separate maintenance granted to the injured party in case of adultery. This view, with special emphasis on the fact that the distinction between sending away a wife and granting her a bill of divorce was one known to the Jews of Christ's time, is ably defended by J. P. Haran, S.J., in his article "The Indissolubility of Christian Marriage" in *Theological Studies* (II, 2, May, 1941, pp. 198-220). Secondly, a recent very noteworthy contribution by Frs. Robert Dyson and Bernard Leeming, "A Note on Matthew XIX, 3-12" in *The Clergy Review* (XX, 4, April, 1941, pp. 283-294) denies the exegesis of the word *πορνεία*, which has usually been taken as "fornicatio," and referring it to incestuous unions gives a rendering of the passage which is quite in accord with the commonly accepted position that Christ made no exception to His teaching on the indissolubility of marriage—a rendering, besides, free from the rather difficult restrictions of the common opinion. J. P. Arendzen in "Another Note on Matthew XIX, 3-12" in *The Clergy Review* (XXI, 1, July, 1941, pp. 23-26) suggests a third rendering, which again denies that any exception is made in Christ's teaching. Finally we hope to point out later just how provisions were made by the Christian Church for Christians with pagan spouses.

the Paradigm ceases without any original relationship to the Passion. But the woman's action came to be considered as a prophetic sign of the burial, and upon the basis of this significance the fame of the woman appears so great that it is connected with the world mission.⁵⁹

The final quality which Form-criticism assigns to the early communities and which we have isolated for consideration is that of being *autonomous*. By that term I wish to indicate that this method denies that there was present among the various communities any uniformity based on single or hierarchical control. Naturally it is not to be expected that there be difformity among the Christian communities in every point, but the basis of any uniformity that is present is to be sought in the common and inevitable residue of the very earliest Christian life and cult and, among certain churches, in their own native background of culture and religious practice, and not in any common authority imposing identical practice and cult on various Christian centers.

The Form-critics' contention that the various centers were autonomous can be seen to underlie Redlich's statement⁶⁰ that the whole contents of Q give our Lord's guidance on the varied needs of the Antiochene church. This conclusion can be reached only by those who are quite sure that the Antiochene church had peculiar problems ethical, controversial, liturgical, and so on, which were to be solved by a particular creative interpretation of our Lord's sayings directed to the Antiochenes themselves and conceived in the light of their difficulties.

The autonomous development of separate Christian communities cannot be mistaken in Dibelius' insistence on the *formulae* that were created to bear the message:

They produced the formulae; for there can be no question of one and the same Kerygma (message) everywhere passed on by tradition. That there were several formulae is antecedently likely, because as we perceive ever more clearly, the foundation and development of the communities was not carried through by a single will nor according to a single plan. The primitive community at Jerusalem is certainly not the direct forebear of all the Gentile Christian communities; these are rather in part occasional foundations, as they rise out of the fluctuating life of the Roman Empire.⁶¹

⁵⁹ Woolf, *op. cit.*, pp. 60-61.

⁶⁰ Redlich, *op. cit.*, pp. 56-57.

⁶¹ *Die Formgeschichte des Evangeliums* (2d ed.) pp. 18-19.

And while many of the pagan communities hold Paul as their founder, and through him possess a principle of uniformity, still, it is not denied that there were pagan communities that did not owe their origin to him. Thus, the lack of uniformity is something more than would be verified if we had only Judaic foundations and Pauline foundations. And Professor Dibelius⁶² implies the highly individual procedure of separate communities when he asserts that they collected sayings and parables of Jesus "adapting them when necessary to their own circumstances."

In fact it would seem that the real value of our present Gospels is to be found in the answer that criticism will give to the question whether the Gospels proceed from centers which were of such importance in the life of early Christendom that the tradition which they preserved was likely to be more than purely local, was likely to have been fed by tributaries and to have been exposed to correction from many quarters.⁶³ In the mind of Form-critics the more of these independent streams of life that flow into the reservoir of the Gospels the better, for the more we have, the more trustworthy becomes the composite photograph of one whose life and work had little value in themselves, but much in the spiritual and creative forces they unloosed in the Mediterranean world of the first Christian century.⁶⁴

How then does this view of the early Christian communities tally with that which is to be gained from a close study of the letters of him who best knew the temper of these communities? This question we hope to answer in a subsequent article.

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⁶² *The Sermon on the Mount*, p. 34.

⁶³ *The Gospels and the Critic*, pp. 66-67.

⁶⁴ For a development of this point, cf., B. H. Streeter, *The Four Gospels A Study of Origins* (Fourth impression revised. London: Macmillan, 1930), pp. 12-33.

THE CONVERSION OF SAINT PAUL

THE VALIDITY OF HIS TESTIMONY TO THE RESURRECTION OF JESUS CHRIST

REV. JOSEPH L. LILLY, C.M., S.T.D., S.S.L.

St. Paul's biographer, intimate friend and most dear physician (Gal. 4:14), Luke, describes Saul on a journey to Damascus. Armed with pontifical letters of authorization to the synagogues of Damascus, Saul, breathing threats of slaughter against the disciples of the Lord (Acts 9:1ff.), was en route to Damascus, that there he might persecute and ravage the Church of God (Gal. 1:13). This intense enemy of the followers of the Crucified was a Pharisee, and, if we may judge from our Lord's denunciation of that sect (Mt. 23:1ff.), therefore among the very bitterest and most fanatical opponents of Jesus and His followers, yet withal, according to his own testimony, utterly sincere in his active hatred and persecution of the Christians, for he tells us that he advanced in Judaism above many of his contemporaries (Gal. 1:14), and showed much more zeal for the traditions of his fathers (the Pharisees), that he considered it his conscientious duty to do many things against the name of Jesus (Acts 26:9), that he acted ignorantly in unbelief (1 Tim. 1:13), leading a blameless life as regards the justice of the Law (Phil. 3:6).

According to his own testimony—the only available testimony to the state of a man's inner self—Saul was a conscientious and convinced enemy of Jesus and His followers. This convinced and bitter foe of Christianity was suddenly stricken to the ground in the vicinity of Damascus, heard and saw¹ the risen Lord, and at that moment was suddenly transformed from a fierce inquisitor and relentless persecutor of Christianity into its most staunch, fearless, and tireless advocate and herald, unflagging in his zeal and devotion, in spite of the most terrifying obstacles and appalling persecution for thirty years until the last breath of his life.

¹ Not expressly stated but obviously implied in the narrative. Cf. Acts 9:17; 22:14; 9:27; 26:16, and St. Paul bases his claim to be a genuine apostle on the fact that he had seen the risen Lord. 1 Cor. 9:1; 15:8. Moulton, Ramsy, and Weiss contend that Saul was acquainted with our Lord prior to His death. Otherwise, they argue, Saul's conversion is psychologically impossible. The claim is well refuted by Vosté in *Studia Paulina* (1928), p. 30.

According to all genuine believers in Christianity this tremendously significant event can be satisfactorily explained only as a supernatural occurrence. Modern sceptics and avowed rationalists persist in proposing purely natural explanations. In this study we propose to show how utterly unsatisfactory these are, and thus indirectly strengthen the traditional position which regards Paul's conversion as miraculous.

The question is fundamentally important. As Tricot remarks: "It can be said without exaggeration that the conversion of Paul ranks after the resurrection of Jesus in the class of miraculous events which determine the fortune of Christianity, since on these two facts depends in large measure the value of the motives of credibility of the traditional faith."² The best witness, historically speaking, to the resurrection of our Lord is St. Paul, the apostle. He is the best not because any more authority attaches to his word than to that of Peter and the other apostles; neither is it because he has given us fuller and more detailed evidence in his writings than is found in the Gospels and Acts, but because his testimony is contained in the earliest written documents whose date of composition and authenticity are admitted with practical unanimity by both believing and unbelieving critics.³ These documents were written not more than twenty-five years after the resurrection, but Paul carries us back much further than that. He tells us that he had preached the doctrine to the Corinthians some five years before his first epistle, when he had visited them, and he brings us still closer to the momentous event when he writes that he had knowledge of the apparitions of Christ to the apostles and disciples from tradition (1 Cor. 15). This tradition he undoubtedly learned from Peter and the other apostles when three years after his conversion he visited Jerusalem and spent a fortnight with Peter (Gal. 1:18). His own faith in the resurrection goes back three years more to the time of his conversion which occurred from three to five years after the resurrection.⁴ The testimony of Paul, therefore, to the resurrection of Jesus is practically contemporaneous with the event, and

² *Saint Paul, Apôtre des Gentils* (1928), p. 44.

³ These documents are principally the First Epistle to the Corinthians, written in 56 or 57 A.D., and the Epistle to the Galatians written either in 49 or 56 approximately, more probably it seems to be about the latter date.

⁴ This date according to the best critics is placed between 29 (Goguel) and 36 A.D. (Prat). Cf. table in Tricot, *op. cit.*, p. 193.

is, historically speaking, the most precious we have, in view of the fact that many critics date the composition of the Gospels from 70 A.D. downwards, i.e., from forty to eighty or even one hundred years after the resurrection, while they are willing to admit that St. Paul's letters were written between 50 and 67.

Because of this supreme value of St. Paul's testimony the naturalistic critics seek by every possible means to weaken it, hoping thus to undermine the entire evidential value of the New Testament relative to Christianity's chief apologetic dogma.

In order to destroy respect and confidence in the historical records, found in three places in the Acts, of St. Paul's conversion, they begin by pointing out the discrepancies and "formal contradictions" in them.⁵ We shall begin then by examining the passages in these three accounts which, according to the unbelieving critics, are judged to be irreconcilable one with another.

There are three main apparently conflicting statements in one or more of these accounts. The first of these is this: in Acts 9:7 we read: "The men who journeyed with him stood speechless," whereas in St. Paul's speech before Festus and King Agrippa in Acts 26 he describes the whole group as having *fallen to the ground*. Drs. Lake and Cadbury characterize this as "a formal contradiction."⁶ Now we are willing to admit that there is a formal contradiction if the word "stood" (*εἰστήκεισαν*) is used only in the literal sense to designate the upright position of the body and if such upright position of the body can only be predicated of the same moment as is the "fallen" (*καταπεσόντων*)" of Acts 26:14. But neither of these conditions can be established. First, such authorities as Thayer,⁷ Knowling,⁸ Liddell and Scott,⁹ Jacquier,¹⁰ and Knabenbauer¹¹ all admit that this verb is, in the words of Liddell and Scott, often "merely a strong form of *εἶναι*—to be in a certain place or state," or "to

⁵ These accounts are: Acts 9:1-19, St. Luke's own narrative; Acts 22: 1-21, Paul's own speech to the mob at Jerusalem; Acts 26:2-23, Paul's speech before King Agrippa and the Roman procurator, Festus, at Caesarea.

⁶ *The Beginnings of Christianity*, Part I. *The Acts of the Apostles*, edited by F. J. Foakes-Jackson, D.D., and Kirsopp Lake, D.D., D.Litt., Vol. IV, English Translation and Commentary, p. 101. (1933).

⁷ *Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament* (1889) *s.v.*

⁸ *The Expositor's Greek Testament* (1901), Vol. II, p. 233.

⁹ *Greek-English Lexicon* (1930), *s.v.*, Part V, p. 841.

¹⁰ *Les Actes des Apôtres* (1926), p. 286.

¹¹ *Cursus Completus a P. S.J., Comm. in Actus Apost.* (1899), p. 162.

continue, persist, persevere, remain" with no reference to bodily position whatever, and, secondly, as Knowling, Jacquier¹² and others point out, the companions may well have fallen to the ground at the first shock of the brilliant light, and then have risen to their feet again, in such a way that the εἰστήκεισαν of Acts 9:7 refers to their regaining their feet, whereas the καταπεσόντων refers to their first position immediately after the burst of light flooded them. Knowling well remarks that "it is frivolous to find a contradiction here with Acts 26:14." Jacquier thinks¹³ that it is evident from the position of the words in 9:7 ("they stood speechless") that they refer to the end of the incident after Jesus had spoken to Saul. Lake and Cadbury are accordingly in no way justified in claiming a "formal contradiction" on this point.

Let us pass now to the second "formal contradiction."¹⁴ In Acts 9:7 we read: ἀκούοντες μὲν τῆς φωνῆς, μηδένα δὲ θεωροῦντες. In Acts 22:9 we read: οἱ δὲ σὺν ἐμοὶ ὄντες τὸ μὲν φῶς ἐθεάσαντο, τὴν δὲ φωνὴν οὐκ ἤκουσαν τοῦ λαλοῦντός μοι. I do not think that we can satisfactorily explain away this apparent conflict by appealing to the difference of meaning between the genitive and the accusative after the verb ἀκούω for although in classical Greek "to hear a sound" is regularly expressed by ἀκούειν φωνῆς while to perceive articulate and intelligible sounds is expressed by ἀκούειν φωνήν in the New Testament both constructions are used indiscriminately with the meaning of intellectual perception.¹⁵ I think it better to say that when the expression ἀκούειν φωνήν or φωνῆς is used absolutely, with either the genitive or accusative, it means simply to hear a sound with no intellectual perception of

¹² *Expositor's Greek Testament*, *ibid.*; *Les Actes des Apôtres*, *ibid.*

¹³ *Op. cit.*, p. 798.

¹⁴ So Lake and Cadbury characterize it. *Op. cit.*, Vol IV., p. 101.

¹⁵ So Blass-Thackery, *Grammar of N. T. Greek* (1911), p. 103; Roberson, *A Grammar of the Greek N. T. in the Light of Historical Research* (1914-1919), and Simcox, *Language of the N. T.* (1889), think that the accusative accentuates intellectual perception of the sound, while the genitive calls attention to the sound produced by the voice, without accentuating the meaning of the words. The word ἀκούω has two meanings corresponding to these two cases: the one *to hear*, the other *to understand*. For examples of this verb with the accusative, cf., Acts 9:4; 22:9,14; 26:14 in the sense of intellectual perception; with the genitive also in the sense of intellectual perception, cf., Acts 11:7; 22:7. Cf. Jacquier, *op. cit.*, p. 286.

ideas, but when the expression is used in conjunction with some such addition as τοῦ λαλοῦντός μοι then it obviously indicates intellectual perception of articulate words. It is quite obvious from the context that such is the meaning of St. Luke and St. Paul in this case. In 9:7 when St. Luke writes that they heard the voice, he means that they heard the *sound* of a human voice, and in 22:9 when St. Paul declares that "they did not hear the voice of him who was speaking to me" he means that they did not understand the content of the message.¹⁶ In this way it is easy enough without having recourse to any far-fetched or impossible interpretation to explain the apparent antilogy.¹⁷ Lake and Cadbury who contend that there is a formal contradiction in these two parallel passages, at the same time admit that "of these differences the first two are unimportant, and are such as are always found in any narrative which is repeated. Any lawyer knows that complete agreement between witnesses, or the exact repetition of the same story, is a sign of fabrication or of very careful preparation."¹⁸

But concerning the next difficulty they make no such concession. It concerns the role played by Ananias in the conversion and apostolic commission of St. Paul. This difficulty they declare to do "in a different category."¹⁹ They contend that the "first apostolic commission of Paul was given through Ananias." Then they cite St. Paul's own insistence in Gal. 1 on his complete independence of human intermediary in his instruction and apostolic commission, and go on to say: "By no possibility can these statements (in Galatians) be reconciled with the story that Paul did not receive his commission directly from Jesus, who merely told him to go to Damascus to receive further instructions which were communicated to him through a man—Ananias."²⁰

¹⁶ Thus it is not necessary to have recourse to Chrysostom's explanation which seems to be a subterfuge, although it is declared by Jacquier (*op. cit.*, p. 799) to be in accord with the context. Chrysostom thinks that the voice they heard was Saul's (Acts 9:7) and that the voice they did not hear was that of Christ speaking to Saul. *Hom. XLVII in Acta.* MGP 69, 328.

¹⁷ McGarry, *Paul and the Crucified* (1940), points out, pp. 6-8, that the word φωνή may mean either inarticulate sounds or articulate words. Ακούω may mean either the action of the senses or the comprehension of the mind.

¹⁸ *Op. cit.*, Vol. V., p. 189.

¹⁹ *Ibid.* ²⁰ *Op. cit.*, p. 190.

Now let us consult the record and see how the foregoing statement agrees with it. In the account of Acts 26 there is no difficulty. There the Lord is described by Paul himself as directly giving the apostle his commission. There is no mention of Ananias at all. But in chapters 22 and 9, the Lord is described as instructing Saul to go to Damascus, where he is to be told by another what he is to do. In chapter 9, however, there is no mention of any instruction or commission imparted to Saul by Ananias. The latter simply imposed hands on the new convert and baptized him, and in view of St. Paul's most emphatic assertion in Gal. 1, we are justified in concluding from this silence with Jacquier that "he was baptized without previous instruction, since he had been instructed directly by God."²¹ What then is the meaning of "there it will be told thee what thou must do"? Who is to tell Saul and what is he to be told? This should be understood, it seems to me, not of a complete course in Christian doctrine, not of St. Paul's apostolic commission, but of what he was to do to be rid of his blindness, and how he was to be received into the Church, i.e., by having the sacrament of initiation administered by a man, and be inducted into the Church by a man in the way which Christ Himself had established.²² When then did St. Paul get his instruction? It may well be that during the days he spent in prayer and fasting at Damascus prior to his baptism the Lord made further communications to him. Such is the view of Rendall in the *Expositor's Greek Testament*.²³

Now let us see if the account in Acts 9 gives any hint that Saul was instructed by Ananias or received his apostolic commission from him. "Nothing is said," as Knowling remarks, "of the apostle receiving his apostleship from Ananias."²⁴ All that we are told in this account of Ananias is that he laid hands on Saul that he might receive his sight and be filled with the Holy Spirit, and that he baptized him. But Lake seems to equate being filled with the Holy Spirit with being appointed an apostle. "Paul went at once to Damascus, where Ananias... was commissioned... to communicate to him the gift of the Spirit, which would fit him to be a witness of Jesus. Thus the first apostolic commission of Paul was given through Ananias."²⁵

²¹ *Op. cit.*, p. 292. Cf. Callan, *Acts of the Apostles*² (1919), p. 70.

²² Cf. Knabenbauer, *op. cit.*, p. 160; Rendall, *Expositor's Greek Testament*, III, p. 153.

²³ III, p. 154.

²⁴ *Expositor's Greek Testament*, II, p. 505.

²⁵ *Op. cit.*, V, p. 189.

But being filled with the Holy Spirit is far from being equivalent to the commission to the apostleship. Stephen is said to have been full of the Holy Spirit (Acts 7:55), yet has anyone ever contended that he was an apostle in the technical sense of the term? The converts of Samaria, when Peter and John laid hands on them, received the Holy Spirit, but by that fact they did not become apostles (Acts 8:17). The centurion Cornelius received the Holy Spirit, but he was not an apostle (Acts 10:43). The requisites for the apostolic office are indicated in the New Testament: (1) the candidate must have been a witness of the resurrection (Acts 1:22; 1 Cor. 9:1); (2) the candidate must have been appointed by our Lord to the office (Acts 1:24; 10:41; Rom. 1:1; Gal. 1:1). This second requisite is fulfilled even in the case of Matthias, for after the apostles had appointed two candidates, they prayed: "Thou, Lord, who knowest the hearts of all, show which of these two thou hast chosen to take the place in this ministry and apostleship from which Judas fell away to go to his own place" (Acts 1:24). Matthias was then chosen by the Lord whose preference was manifested by the lots.²⁶ Accordingly Baptism and the reception of the Holy Spirit through the ministry of Ananias in no wise impairs St. Paul's claim in Gal. 1 to be "an apostle sent not from men nor by man, but by Jesus Christ and God the Father."²⁷

The account in Acts 22 is practically the same as in 9. There we read: "Go into Damascus, and there thou shalt be told of all that thou art destined to do." The things which he was destined to do had been determined by God, and included merely the necessary steps to be taken for Paul's reception into the Church by the door of baptism.²⁸ Then Ananias is quoted by Paul as saying: "The God of our fathers has appointed thee beforehand to learn his will and to see the Just One and to hear a voice from his mouth; for thou shalt be his witness before all men of what thou has seen and heard." The 'for' (ὅτι), as Lake and Cadbury admit, may be taken as giving the contents of the voice of our Lord, and should accordingly be translated 'that.'²⁹ Taking the ὅτι in

²⁶ Cf., Batiffol on the apostolic office in *L'Église Naissante et le Catholicisme* (1927), p. 46 ff.

²⁷ St. Paul bases his claim on the fact that he had seen the Lord, 1 Cor. 9:1; 15:9-10; and on his mission by Christ: 1 Cor. 1:17; Gal. 1:1.

²⁸ Cf. Knabenbauer, *op. cit.*, p. 319.

²⁹ *Op. cit.*, IV. p. 281.

that sense, we have St. Paul represented as getting his commission direct from the Lord, but if we understand *ὅτι* in the sense of 'for,' even then Ananias is not giving Paul his commission but simply declaring something which Paul had already received directly from the Lord or would in the near future receive directly from the Lord during a visit to Jerusalem (Acts 22:21). Ananias simply repeats what St. Paul had already seen and heard directly from the Lord: God has appointed him (the principal requisite for the apostolic office), to know His will and to *see* the Just One (the other requisite qualification for the office of apostle). These requisites are emphasized in "see the Just One" and "hear a voice," which indicated to St. Paul that he was to witness to what he had seen and heard—obviously from the voice of the risen Christ appearing to him.³⁰ Thus "in this speech to the mob at Jerusalem Paul appeals to his right to a full apostleship."³¹

Thus there is no contradiction between the accounts in Acts on the one hand and St. Paul's own claim in Gal. 1 that he is "an apostle sent neither from men nor by man" on the other. St. John Chrysostom was perfectly right when he said that "this man (Ananias) taught him (Paul) nothing."³²

To see different sources in these various passages in Acts relative to St. Paul's conversion and to say that in chapter 26 of Acts Luke omitted the story of Ananias "because he knew that Paul himself refused to accept it,"³³ is, it seems to me, quite absurd. If Luke knew that St. Paul refused to accept the story of Ananias, why did he include it in chapters 9 and 22 of Acts, in this latter chapter incorporating it into a speech which he puts on the lips of the apostle speaking to the mob at Jerusalem? Did Luke doubt the correctness of St. Paul's own story? Did Luke suspect that he had information from other sources which he felt St. Paul was deliberately withholding from him? As Fouard

³⁰ McGarry, *op. cit.*, says that Paul's appointment to the apostolic office was a divine revelation, no human force or authority established him in it, although Paul received it through Ananias. He, however, spoke at the bidding of God. Ananias's was not a human but a divine mandate (pp. 8-9). We, however, do not think it necessary to admit that Saul received his appointment through the medium of Ananias.

³¹ Jacquier, *op. cit.*, p. 650.

³² *Hom. XX on Acts* MPG 60, 157.

³³ Lake, *op. cit.*, V, p. 191.

remarks: "The little pains taken by an historian so careful to eliminate the variations in these narratives shows us that he did not regard them as contradictory, but as different details going to complete the same picture."³⁴ We cannot lose sight of the fact that the author of Acts is the historian who declares that "he has followed up all things carefully from the very first" (Lk. 1:3). And in the case of the conversion of St. Paul with whom St. Luke had been intimately associated in his travels and missionary journeys for a long time, is it conceivable that Luke would have for an instant appealed to any other than the sole authentic source of information? The matter of St. Paul's conversion, as Father McGarry remarks, is purely biographical. Only Paul can testify concerning it.³⁵ Any other information would be suspect, and if in conflict with his own account, would have been immediately discarded by the author of Acts. He and all who know the honest, sincere, truth-loving soul of Paul as it stands revealed to us in his own epistles, could never have suspected Paul of withholding or coloring the truth.³⁶

The correct explanation of the variant details of the several accounts is also mentioned by Lake.³⁷ The omission of any reference to Ananias' part in St. Paul's conversion in Acts 26 is due to a "correct and artistic sense that it was unnecessary in a speech before Herod Agrippa." The two discourses of the apostle cited in Acts wherein he sets forth the account of his conversion are suited to different audiences: in the former case a mob of fanatical Jews, in the other, King Agrippa, Festus, and their entourage. Taking these differences into account we can readily understand the variants in the two speeches as demanded by the difference of audience. This explanation is commonly accepted.³⁸

³⁴ *St. Peter and the First Years of Christianity* (Tr. Griffith, 1893), p. 118.

³⁵ *Op. cit.*, p. 10.

³⁶ This argument is based on the thesis that St. Luke, companion of St. Paul, is the author of Acts. Many present day critics will not agree with Renan and Harnack in accepting this thesis. We think, however, that the unity of the book and its Lucan authorship are thoroughly established. cf. Art., "Les Actes des Apôtres" in *Dictionnaire de la Bible*, Supplement (Pirot), Vol. I, cols. 42 ff. Also cf., *The Beginnings of Christianity*, Part I, *The Acts of the Apostles*, Vol. V, pp. 205-359 for critical statements for and against the Lucan authorship of Acts.

³⁷ *Op. cit.*, Vol. V, p. 101.

³⁸ Jacquier, *op. cit.*, pp. 799-800; Knabenbauer, *op. cit.*, p. 374. Fouard, *op. cit.* p. 118 (footnote).

Having established that there is no reason to discount the historical credibility of the various records of St. Paul's conversion given in Acts because of the supposed intrinsic "formal contradictions," because there are none, let us now proceed to the consideration of the various explanations which critics have suggested with a view of eliminating the supernatural from the apostle's sudden and complete metamorphosis. We can dismiss with brief mention those theories which, like Renan's³⁹ and Spencer's,⁴⁰ invent thunderstorms, sandstorms, strokes of lightning, physical exhaustion from the mad tracking down of the hated Nazarenes, fever, which especially in Saul's weakened condition would superinduce a nervous breakdown, or in less euphemistic language, delirium.⁴¹ We dismiss these suppositions very briefly because there is no historical evidence whatever in support of them. They spring from the imaginations of such avowed agnostics as Renan and Spencer, and why should we waste time talking about the figments of such men's imaginations spurred on by the desire to invent an explanation of the event which eliminates the supernatural. Storms, as Père Hugueny remarks,⁴² do not superinduce hallucinations. The only idea that comes to the mind in the midst of a storm is that of seeking shelter from it. Fever may bring on temporary delirium, and in this state of delirium one may imagine almost anything, but when the fever has passed

³⁹ *Les Apôtres*, ch. x., p. 174 ff.

⁴⁰ *Beyond Dasmascus* (1934), p. 128 ff. On this book a reviewer in *America*, vol. 52, no. 1., p. 20, says: "Much of it is sheer romancing, without evidence, and it is well seasoned with what colloquially would be designated 'old wives' tales' . . . St. Paul is to Spencer little more than a religious fanatic, self-deceived and a victim of hallucination." Father Gillis in the *Catholic World*, vol. 140, Nov. 1934, p. 129 ff., has a powerful and incisive criticism of this book. It is also very adversely criticised in *Commonweal*, vol. 22, (1935) by Patrick J. Healy, who says that the author belongs to the "perhaps," "ought," and "probably" school of historiographers.

⁴¹ Albert Schweitzer in *The Mysticism of Paul* (Tr. Montgomery, 1931), p. 153, suggests the following: "The most natural hypothesis is therefore that Paul suffered from some kind of epileptiform attacks, which does not by any means necessarily mean that he was a real epileptic. It would agree with this that on the Damascus road he heard voices during an attack, and suffered afterwards from a temporary affection of the eyesight, if his experiences at his conversion really happened during such an attack." The remark is occasioned by Gal. 4:13-14.

⁴² *Critique et Catholique* (1912), I. *Apologetique*, pp. 109-110.

and sanity returns the women of the Orient as well as the philosophers of the West like Dr. Spencer, know, if indeed they recall at all the strange experiences they went through, that they were merely the ravings of a fever-racked brain, and dismiss them as of no consequence. Only if the delirium persists and settles down into a permanent state of mental derangement, do the experiences remain and take on the appearance of objective reality. Even Renan and Spencer will not for a moment contend that Paul was permanently insane. Indeed Dr. Spencer pays the following tribute to the Apostle's sanity: "The general soundness of his reasoning power, the canniness and shrewdness which he showed in organizing and managing churches, preclude the assumption that Paul spent his entire life either in the throes of an epileptic fit or feebly recovering from spasms of this kind... Unlike hysterical, over-sexed, passive mystics Paul shows himself essentially practical and dynamic. His mystic tendencies in no way unfit him for the task of organizing and governing the church. He regards with more than a little suspicion those who let miraculous and mystic powers get out of control."⁴³

So we may dismiss the romancing historians of St. Paul's life (we merely mention in passing those who profess to be historians,⁴⁴ and do not even notice novelists like Donn Byrne,⁴⁵ who professedly is writing a bit of fiction in his "Brother Saul."), and pass to the psychologists (or if you prefer, the psychiatrists). It must be admitted that they are under a tremendous handicap: eighteen hundred years separate them from their subject.⁴⁶ But no difficulty baffles that *deus ex machina*, psychology,⁴⁷ which in

⁴³ *Op. cit.*, pp. 150 and 333.

⁴⁴ Spencer professes to abhor "reconstructions," writing: "Reconstructions as a principle I abhor. Now and then because of Paul's reticence, or Luke's telegraphic style, I have indulged in it, but on the whole I have religiously abstained from coloring up my sources" (p. xii). Yet, if his account of Paul's conversion is not merely a reconstruction but a highly fictionalized reconstruction with much, even fantastic, coloring up of the sources, then I do not know the meaning of "reconstruction" and "coloring up."

⁴⁵ Donn Byrne's *Brother Saul*, a novel published in 1926 teems with historical improbabilities and falsehoods. The author represents Paul as an epileptic, a misogynist, a religious fanatic, a trickster, and as uncertain whether the sight of the risen Lord was an hallucination or not.

⁴⁶ So remarks McGarry, *op. cit.*, pp. 9-16.

⁴⁷ The phrase is Father Gillis' in review cited above.

the hands of the modern rationalist experts on the human soul can solve any psychological riddle. They point out that Saul's hatred of Christianity was so intense as to assume the proportions of a fanatical rage, a veritable psychosis. He was, they tell us, of an extremely fervid, enthusiastic, and imaginative make-up, and had a most delicate conscience. With that extremely delicate conscience he naturally began to doubt, as must sooner or later happen with every fanatic who has a delicate conscience—he began to doubt whether he was not making a tremendous mistake in pursuing the Christians with such murderous mania and ruinous rage. The heroism and evident sincerity of Stephen, his stirring eloquence, his surprising skill in manipulating Old Testament prophecies, his extraordinary kindness in praying for the pardon of his murderers, that heavenly expression of indescribable peace and calm on his face—all this combined to make Paul doubt the correctness of his course. "Perhaps," his conscience tormented him, "the Christians are right after all"? Thus there was a terrific struggle in his soul. Nock writes: "Analogies suggest that his conversion was not the sudden thing which it seemed to him: the movement had probably fascinated him at the same time that it excited his deepest animosity, and it must have been the question, if the unvoiced question, of his life for some time. 'Why dost thou kick against the pricks?' is the truth of psychology, if not of history."⁴⁸

For the sake of convenience we may consider two types of rationalist explanation of the event near Damascus which have some plausibility and find some—usually slight and always merely apparent—support in the New Testament: the physiological and the psychological. Neither type is exclusive of the other; the one borrows support from the other, and they are combined more or less in every attempt to give a natural explanation of the conversion of St. Paul.

Holsten, apparently the ablest exponent of the physiological explanation,⁴⁹ points to Paul's hysterical make-up, his nervous excitable temperament, his tendency to visions and ecstasies, and

⁴⁸ *St. Paul* (1938), p. 73.

⁴⁹ Cf. *DBV* (1908). Tome IV, *Saint Paul* par C Toussaint, col. 2197 ff; Art., "Paul the Apostle" in *HDB*. (1909) by G. G. Findlay, p. 702 ff. Both of these credit Holsten with the best explanation of the kind.

finally his predisposition to epilepsy.⁵⁰ These ideas have been shared by rationalists ever since.⁵¹

First, as to St. Paul's makeup. Was he so unduly excitable? Was he hysterical? Was he a visionary, i.e., a man who was always "seeing things where there was nothing real to be seen"?

That St. Paul had ecstatic experiences and visions he himself tells us, but it is perfectly clear that he knew full well how to distinguish these experiences from the perception of objective visual reality. Since we have already discussed this point, we say nothing further on it here.⁵²

We are, also, ready to admit that St. Paul was full of nervous energy and eloquence, but that he was nervous or neurasthenic to the extent of becoming hysterical and therefore mentally unbalanced no sane student of his extant writings and of the accounts of his activities in Acts will for a moment admit. In times of great stress, such as the Ephesian riot (Acts 19), his arrest at the temple of Jerusalem in the midst of a howling, murderous mob (Acts 21), his appearance before various courts, and other such like circumstances, he showed a wonderful calm, perfect self-possession and a clear-headed rationality. There is not the least indication that he was given to fits of hysteria. As Bauman remarks: "The magnificent poise of his thinking as a theologian and of his life as an Apostle is enough to refute such a theory (that Paul was half mad). The explanation of the supernatural in terms of pathology will always be the last refuge of a scientist at bay."⁵³ Accordingly, we dismiss this hypothesis as too absurd to be further discussed.

As to St. Paul's physical ailment, nobody knows what it was, although some critics have been quite positive in its identification.⁵⁴ There are, however, three diagnoses which have enjoyed considerable vogue and have rallied the support of eminent critics and medical men. These we shall consider in turn. But, first, let us set down the symptoms which St. Paul himself furnishes.

⁵⁰ In *Zum Evangelium des Paulus* (1880).

⁵¹ Thus Schweitzer, *op. cit.*, p. 153. Kent: *The Work and Teaching of the Apostles* (1916), p. 76 f. Spencer, however, decidedly rejects the hypothesis, *op. cit.* p. 150.

⁵² Cf. Catholic Biblical Quarterly IV, pp. 23-36.

⁵³ *St. Paul* (Tr. Burke), p. 42.

⁵⁴ Cf. Allo, *Deuxième Épître aux Corinthiens* (1937). p. 319 ff.

1. The affliction is described in 2 Cor. 12:7 as *σκόλοψ τῇ σαρκί, ἄγγελος σατανᾶ, ἵνα με κολαφίζῃ*. This is not exactly translated by the Vulgate's "stimulus carnis," an erroneous rendering which gave rise to the mistaken middle age explanation that the expression designated carnal temptations.⁵⁵ The term *σκόλοψ* designates a piece of pointed wood, a stake driven in, a pale, instrument of cruel torture, or simply a thorn, a splinter.⁵⁶ It is generally agreed by modern exegetes that it here designates a physical ailment which was permanent and caused intense pain, for the verb *κολαφίζω* means to strike with the closed fist and is in the present tense as Chrysostom points out,⁵⁷ indicating something that was recurrent over a period of time. It is generally assumed that the same ailment is referred to in Gal. 4:13ff, and Allo thinks that the illness alluded to in 2 Cor. 1:9-10 and in 1 Thess. 2:18 is the same as that characterized as a stake in 2 Cor. 12:7.⁵⁸

2. In Gal. 4 this affliction is described as something which rendered St. Paul repulsive to others, so repulsive that they would be inclined to spit out (in the superstitious belief that by so doing they would chase away the demon that caused the malady).

3. From 2 Cor. 1:8-10, assuming that this passage refers to the same illness, we learn that its attacks were at times so severe as to bring Paul to the brink of the grave.

4. From 1 Thess. 2:18, again assuming that the hindrance there alluded to is the same illness, we learn that it laid Paul so low that travel was out of the question.

From the foregoing allusions, rather vague it must be admitted, we deduce the following symptoms: (a) a severe and painful bodily affliction; (b) it was chronic; (c) it was humiliating to Paul; (d) it made him repulsive to those who came in contact with him; (e) it impeded travel; (f) its attacks at times were so severe as to put him *in extremis*.

⁵⁵ Estius defends this interpretation at length in *Commentarius in Omnes D. Pauli Epistolas*, (Edition of Vives, 1891), II, pp. 187 ff.

⁵⁶ Rickaby, *Notes on St. Paul* (1898), p. 213; Van Steenkiste (1898), *Commentarius in Omnes D. Pauli Epistolas*, I, p. 498; MacRory, *The Epistles of St. Paul to the Corinthians* (1915), p. 144; Callan: *The Epistles of St. Paul* (1922), Vol. I, p. 554; Allo: *Seconde Épitre aux Corinthiens* (1937), p. 309 ff.; Thayer, *s.v.*; Liddell and Scott, *s.v.*

⁵⁷ *Hom. XXVI in 2 Cor.* MPG 61, 577.

⁵⁸ *Op. cit.*, *Excursus I and XVI*, pp. 15 ff. and 313 ff.

In view of these rather vague symptoms, let us see what possibility there is that St. Paul was an epileptic.

Father Allo quotes an array of medical and other authorities in summing up the following arguments against epilepsy:

(1) Paul's visions, so deeply engraved in his consciousness, could not have been caused by epilepsy, for during its attacks unconsciousness is complete, and the victim retains only the vaguest and most confused ideas of what happened during the periods of waning and awakening consciousness which precede and follow the attack.⁵⁹ There could be no connection between Paul's conversion and his mysterious disease, because, according to the only rational explanation of 2 Cor. 12:7, the "stake" made its first appearance at the time, shortly before or shortly after, of Paul's being rapt to the third heaven, i.e., about 43 A.D., many years after his conversion.⁶⁰

(2) Clinical observations have established that three fourths of epileptics are mentally and morally inferior to such an extent that they are incapable of being real leaders of men. They have certain characteristics of mind that are exactly the opposite of what we know Paul to have been: introversion, lack of self assurance, absence of meekness, a false and purely external religiosity.⁶¹ St. Paul exhibited none of these characteristics.

(3) Epilepsy does not fit the metaphor of the "stake" which indicates a painful malady. Attacks of epilepsy, accompanied as they are by complete loss of consciousness, are painless.

(4) The attacks do not directly and intrinsically entail the danger of death; St. Paul's malady brought him to death's door.⁶²

⁵⁹ Cf., *Treatment of Epilepsy* by Fritz B. Talbot (1930), p. 67: "On waking epileptics have no recollection of what has occurred and occasionally do not even remember events which immediately preceded the onset of the attack."

⁶⁰ There is a relation of cause and effect between Paul's visions and his affliction. It was to serve as a check to possible pride which might result from his extraordinary heavenly favors and therefore must have come shortly after or shortly before his visions.

⁶¹ Talbot, *op. cit.*, p. 71 ff., gives the following characteristics of epilepsy: "The lack of social adaptability attributed to these individuals may perhaps be a direct symptom of epilepsy... it is undoubtedly characteristic of many subjects of epilepsy... It seems to be closely allied with overbearing conceit and assurance of many of those patients, which is out of all proportion to their accomplishments."

⁶² This is based on the assumption that the reference in 2 Cor. 1:8-10 is to St. Paul's chronic illness.

(5) The life expectancy of epileptics is reduced about twenty-five years below the average. St. Paul lived to be close to seventy years of age, the proverbial three score and ten of the Bible. This estimate is based on the assumption that he was at least thirty years old at the time of his conversion about 33 A.D., and that he died in 67.⁶³

(6) Epileptic fits would readily explain the character of the disease which rendered its victims repulsive, but there are other diseases which make their victims no less repulsive.⁶⁴

To the foregoing arguments we may add the following considerations: the kind of life the Apostle led would have given constant and repeated incitements to attack, if he were an epileptic, and would have so intensified the disease as to unfit him altogether for the active and difficult missionary life he led. Talbot writes: "Another type of hazard must also be avoided, i.e., great emotional and physical strain. Epileptics cannot stand the wear and tear of warfare, for instance. They should not be required to carry continuous burdensome responsibility, but in avoiding this there is no reason for complete withdrawal from life."⁶⁵

It has often been stated that great leaders and dynamic personalities like Julius Caesar and Napoleon Bonaparte were epileptics. But this contention cannot be proven.⁶⁶

⁶³ Jews were not ordinarily entrusted by the Synagogue with missions such as Paul's to Damascus until they had reached at least their thirtieth year. Talbot, *op. cit.*, p. 59 ff. writes: "Without mental impairment the outlook is better, and the patient may often be expected to live as long as a normal individual. Statistics quoted by Muskens (216. p. 359) show that the death rate of epileptics is highest between the ages of 25 and 30 years. At the Monson State Hospital of Massachusetts the age of death of 205 patients examined in autopsy was 38.9 years in individuals with apparently normal brains, and 41.1 years in individuals with abnormal brains. The only conclusion that can safely be drawn from these figures, however, is that probably epilepsy somewhat reduces the length of life."

⁶⁴ Cf. Allo, *op. cit.*, p. 316 ff.

⁶⁵ *Op. cit.*, p. 61.

⁶⁶ Talbot, *op. cit.*, p. 8 ff.; Allo, *op. cit.*, p. 313. At least two books have come to my notice written on the subject "Was Paul an epileptic?" and "Paul etait-il epileptique?" But I have been unable to consult either of them, written respectively in 1913 and 1910. Advocates of this absurd hypothesis point to great men and leaders who were supposedly epileptics, such as Bonaparte, Flaubert, Dostoiewsky, Julius Caesar, Ferdinand the Catholic, Peter the Great. The only two in this incomplete list who were certainly epileptics were Flaubert and Dostoiewsky, and they were men

It is therefore highly improbable, if not impossible, that St. Paul was an epileptic.⁶⁷ And even though he were, this affliction which came to him many years after his conversion, could not be appealed to as one of the natural causes which may have produced the supposedly hallucinatory appearance of the risen Lord to him near Damascus. We are very much inclined to suspect that the advocates of this theory are impelled by the *a priori* motive of finding naturalistic explanations of the Apostle's conversion.

Next comes the psychological explanation. This theory tells us that St. Paul's conversion was not altogether sudden: that there was a long period of doubt and perplexity, a gradually strengthening attraction to Jesus Christ and His followers, a dissatisfaction with the Mosaic religion, and that the quest for religious truth and peace amidst anguish of mind and torturing doubts about the justice of his savage persecution of the Christians finally reached a crisis near Damascus, and with complete suddenness the conviction that Christianity was true burst upon Saul with such clearness and force that he *imagined* he saw the risen Lord and heard Him speaking. Felder quotes Frenssen as recreating the gloomy psychological state of Saul and his broodings as he rode towards Damascus, in the following terms:

They say He was holy and infinitely lovable, and wanted us men to be children of God, excluding all forms of piety... Yes, that is true... And was He killed and has He risen from the dead?... freed from the miserable body? They have seen Him with their eyes? What if it were true?... Ah!... if He... if He should show Himself to me!

of letters, not men of action and leaders. These latter must keep cool and be in perfect possession of their faculties in all sorts of crises. They must be able to withstand nervous strain. Cf. Allo, *op. cit.*, p. 114.

⁶⁷ In passing we may ask what was the mysterious malady which afflicted Paul unto his humiliation. The eye malady which some suppose to have been Paul's thorn in the flesh has very little to recommend it. It is based almost entirely on a doubtful interpretation of Gal. 4:13ff. (Cf. Lagrange, *Épître aux Galates*, 1913, p. 114). Allo is in favor of an intermittent fever, a special kind of malaria common throughout the Mediterranean basin, known as Malta or Neapolitan fever. It causes severe headache, nocturnal delirium, skin eruptions which render the victim repulsive, the falling out of the hair (St. Paul was bald according to the apocryphal Acts of Paul), and it predisposes to endocarditis and pneumonia. These diseases may easily prove fatal. The superstitious attributed them to demonic influence and spat out before the victims to remove from them the diabolic influence which caused these maladies. Cf. Allo, *op. cit.*, pp. 320-321.

If I should see Him risen from the dead, proved to be a guest of heaven, then... then I should be freed, through Him from this body of death... I should stand in a free, exalted life, close to God's knee, a blessed being... yes... then!... then!... And lo!... there... When he reached that point in his fearful doubts, he experienced one of those severe bodily and mental conditions, and He saw Him who was thus tormenting his heart, radiant with light and glowing with wonderful, heavenly majesty and beauty.⁶⁸

Is there any justification in the contemporary documents for such a process of doubt and misgivings on the part of Saul prior to his conversion? Appeal is made first to the statement attributed to our Lord by Paul in his speech before Festus and Agrippa (Acts 26:14): "It is hard for thee to kick against the goad." Some interpret this statement to mean that Saul was struggling against a secret attraction to Christianity, resisting his innermost convictions and trying to drown out and silence the promptings of conscience by his furious frenzy of hatred and rage against the followers of Jesus of Nazareth. Such may be the meaning of the proverbial expression. Lattey,⁶⁹ Findlay,⁷⁰ Van Steekiste,⁷¹ McEvilly,⁷² and Callan⁷³ explain it of resisting the grace of God. Chrysostom explains it of the impossibility of overcoming and destroying the Church.⁷⁴ Lake and Cadbury,⁷⁵ Madame Cecelia,⁷⁶ Jacquier,⁷⁷ and Knowling⁷⁸ explain it in a similar way—of a vain effort against a superior force.

But many of those who admit that there was a struggle against the motions of grace in Saul's soul, at the same time point out that the doubts and perplexities he may have experienced are not sufficient to explain the sudden and complete change in his attitude to Christ which took place near Damascus. Thus Findlay

⁶⁸ *Christ and the Critics* (Tr. Stoddard, 1924), p. 421.

⁶⁹ Lattey, *Readings in First Corinthians* (1924), p. 13 f.

⁷⁰ Art. in *HDB*. III, p. 120.

⁷¹ *Acta Apostolorum* (1889), p. 120.

⁷² *An Exposition of the Acts* (1899), p. 103.

⁷³ *Acts of the Apostles*² (1919), p. 67

⁷⁴ *In Hom. ante Exilium* (probably authentic).

⁷⁵ *Op. cit.*, IV, p. 318,

⁷⁶ *The Acts of the Apostles* (1925), pp. 198, 442.

⁷⁷ *Op. cit.*, p. 710.

⁷⁸ *Expositor's Greek Testament*, II, p. 595. He says: "The words may simply mean that it was a foolish and inefficacious effort to try to persecute Jesus in His followers, an effort which would only inflict deeper wounds on himself, an effort as idle as that described by the Psalmist, Ps. 2:3-4."

writes: "The conversion of St. Paul is a psychological and ethical problem the solution of which is to be found only in the actual appearance of Jesus Christ to his senses on the way to Damascus."⁷⁹

We think, however, that this internal struggle is not likely. We have no choice in this matter but to listen to the deposition of the principal, indeed the only trustworthy and competent, witness, Paul himself. In his uncontested epistles St. Paul refers several times to his conversion. Three declarations are decisive against such an internal struggle, at least such a struggle as would of itself, without miraculous intervention, have culminated in his sudden and complete change, a lightning-like stroke which took him by complete surprise in the midst of complete fanaticism, and brought him in an instant from one extreme to the other, from extreme antipathy to extreme sympathy.⁸⁰

The first declaration is in Gal. 1:12-17. It reads: "Neither did I receive it [the gospel Paul preached] from man, nor was I taught it; but I received it from a revelation of Jesus Christ. For you have heard of my former manner of life in Judaism; how beyond all measure I persecuted the Church of God, and ravaged it. And I advanced in Judaism above many of my contemporaries in my nation, showing much more zeal for the traditions of my fathers. But when it pleased him who from my mother's womb set me apart and called me by his grace, to reveal his Son in me, that I might preach him among the Gentiles, immediately, without taking counsel with flesh and blood, and without going up to Jerusalem to those who were appointed apostles before me, I retired into Arabia, and again returned to Damascus."

In these words St. Paul tells us that he was intensely devoted to the cause of Judaism, which he thought was menaced by the movement, Christianity, and that, consequently, he persecuted the new religion with intense ardor and fanatic fierceness. There is not the slightest indication that he experienced any interior struggle, was tortured by doubts which gradually led him to a complete change of views relative to Christianity. On the contrary he represents his conversion as coming with complete, lightning-like rapidity, and attributes it as well as his Christian doctrine

⁷⁹ *Art. cit.*, *HDB.*, III., p. 703a.

⁸⁰ *Art. in VDB.* IV. cols 2197-2199.

to the direct intervention of Jesus Christ. His sudden and complete change from a bitter opponent of Jesus Christ to an ardent admirer he ascribes exclusively to the grace of God and a special revelation made to him by Jesus Christ.⁸¹

The second declaration is found in 1 Cor. 9:1: "Am I not an apostle? Have I not seen Jesus our Lord"? Here St. Paul bases his claim to be a genuine apostle on the fact that he has seen the risen Lord just as the other apostles had.⁸² The sight of the risen Lord is one of the essential qualifications for an apostle, as we have already stated. In making the claim St. Paul had in mind the appearance near the Damascus gate, which he sedulously distinguishes from subsequent visions. These latter belong to his private life and he speaks of them only with the greatest reluctance in 2 Cor. 12:1-5, and in the vaguest terms. But the appearance near Damascus he refers to repeatedly as the basis of his apostolic authority. His private revelations he attributes to the Spirit, but the Damascus experience was the sight of the risen Lord, to which objective appearance he attributes, and to no other cause, his complete and thorough conversion.

The third passage is 1 Cor. 15:8. Here he puts the appearance of the risen Lord on the same plane as those to the other apostles, and in referring to himself as an abortion, he indicates, according to Robertson and Plummer,⁸³ the suddenness and violence of his conversion in contrast to the other apostles. Theirs was a gradual and normal process; his was a swift and abnormal change. Thus St. Paul assigns his conversion to the special intervention of our Lord appearing to him objectively, and thus he rules out any natural causes as the adequate explanation of his utter surrender to Jesus and to His religion.

In addition to the foregoing we may appeal to St. Paul's speech before Festus and King Agrippa: "And I indeed did formerly think that I *ought to* do many things contrary to the name of Jesus of Nazareth" (Acts 26:9), words which indicate that St. Paul acted in entire good faith with no scruples, no hesitancy whatever about the correctness of his procedure. This is further reinforced by the apostle's statement in 1 Tim. 1:13, where he writes that he obtained mercy because his blaspheming and per-

⁸¹ Cf. Lagrange, *Épître aux Galates* (1918), pp. 10-17.

⁸² Cf. International Critical Commentary: Robertson and Plummer, *1 Corinthians* (1911), p. 177. Allo: *Première Épître aux Cor.* (1934), p. 209.

⁸³ *Op. cit.*, p. 339.

secution of the followers of Christ was done in ignorance and unbelief.⁸⁴

Another passage to which the advocates of the slow and progressive advance of St. Paul towards Christianity point as favoring their thesis is the seventh chapter of Romans. Here he describes in the first person the hopeless struggle which goes on between one's higher and one's lower rebellious appetites—the law of the members fighting against the law of the mind. This, they argue, indicates that long before the incident of Damascus he had become dissatisfied with the religion of Mosaism, and was being attracted to the religion of Jesus. It may well be that St. Paul is here describing his own personal experiences to a certain extent.⁸⁵ But we think it more probable that he is speaking of human experience in general and not specifically, at least, of his own experiences, for, as Père Lagrange remarks: "If anyone was incapable of experiencing these sentiments, it was a Pharisee, correct and faithful in his duties (Phil. 3:6ff.). Nothing indicates that he had experienced at that time the innermost anxieties of the fall, the pathos of which he places before our eyes."⁸⁶

But granting that St. Paul is here describing his own experience, and that he is evoking the painful remembrance of unavailing struggles and humiliating defeats, it may well be that he came to an understanding of the futility of the struggle for justice, unaided by the grace of Jesus Christ only after his conversion. And even though before his conversion he had experienced some dissatisfaction with Pharasaism, it by no means follows that he was drawn to Christianity. The idea of a suffering, humiliated, and crucified Messiah was most repellent to the Jews, as Paul himself assures us (1 Cor. 1:23), and it is highly improbable that he would have so savagely pursued Christ in his adherents if he had had secret doubts about Mosaism and the secret sympathy for Christianity which is sometimes attributed to him.

⁸⁴ The authenticity of the Pastoral Epistles is generally rejected by rationalist critics. Thus Nock: "The pastorals as a whole are not (Pauline)." *Op. cit.*, p.232.

⁸⁵ So think Sanday and Headlam (*International Critical Commentary, Epistle to the Romans* 1895), p. 196; Cornely *Commentarius in S. Pauli Epistolas* (1896), p. 357 ff.; Boylan: *St. Paul's Epistle to the Romans* (1934), p. 114 ff. Denny in *Expositor's Greek Testament* (1901), II, p. 639; Prat-Stoddard, *Theology of St. Paul* (1926), I, p. 228.

⁸⁶ *Épître aux Rom.*, p. 173. So too Callan, *The Epistles of St. Paul* (1922), I, p. 108 f.

Those who doubt the justice of their cause are usually slack and remiss in their devotion to it. But granted that he had a secret attraction to Christ, yet it remains to be explained how he was led naturally by this secret attraction to the firm and life-long conviction that he had seen the risen Saviour. At any rate we cannot "with any respect for historic truth so describe Paul's conversion. His life-long and abiding conviction was that of an utterly sudden conversion."⁸⁷

Therefore the theory of a gradual and slow approach to Christianity through a long inner struggle finally terminating in Paul's surrender by the force of natural psychological causes to Jesus Christ is, in view of all the available historical evidence, utterly unacceptable.

Another argument drawn from Paul's own writings against the objective reality of the appearance of Christ to him is based on the apostle's statement in Gal. 1:16, that it pleased God to reveal his son "in me" (*ἐν ἐμοί*), i.e., "within me." This is interpreted by some modern rationalists in the sense that Paul experienced merely an internal vision. Thus Loisy, who sees a contradiction between this statement of the apostle and the account of the appearance near Damascus.

St. John Chrysostom gave a very satisfying interpretation of this expression centuries ago when he wrote: "Why did he not say 'reveal his son to me' but 'in me'? To show that not through words alone did he hear the truths of faith, but that he was filled with an abundance of the Spirit, that since revelation was illumining his soul, he had Christ speaking within him."⁸⁸ And that equivalently has been the interpretation ever since,⁸⁹ and it is only in relatively recent times, when rationalist presuppositions require the elimination of the supernatural, that recourse is had to the explanation that the phrase means a purely internal vision excluding any appearance to the senses on the road to Damascus. How, it may reasonably be asked, can these critics insist that the phrase "in me" implies merely an internal vision when St. Paul himself, our best witness, insists that he saw the risen Lord (1 Cor. 9:1; 15:8)? McGarry well says:

⁸⁷Lagrange, *Ep. aux Galates*, p. 14.

⁸⁸*Com. in cap. 1 Ep. ad Gal.* MPG 61, 628.

⁸⁹Cf., Lagrange, *Ep. aux Gal.* p. 14; Callan, *Epistles of St. Paul*, I. p. 590; Rendall in *Ex. Gk. Test.*, III, p. 154.

That a vision is interior does not make it subjective. . . . A revelation from God is undoubtedly received in the intelligence of man. But such reception postulates rather than excludes an objective cause; and so St. Paul considered it, for he said that he saw Christ as the others had. Moreover, we may notice the new information which is contained in this text. When Jesus was seen, Paul perceived not only the risen Man, but was given to know that He was the Son of God. Such knowledge again was "in him" because sufficient objective grounds were present to account for the knowledge, that is, God's revelation.⁹⁰

We therefore reject these rationalist explanations of St. Paul's conversion, whether they be based on psychology or physiology or both. They furnish, neither singly nor combined, any adequate cause of so startling, so sudden, and so complete a change as was effected in the soul of the apostle. They do violence to the testimony of the chief witness; they are, we cannot but suspect, inspired by unproved rationalistic assumptions.

And strange to say, there is at least one rationalist critic who agrees with us. He is M. Maurice Goguel who bluntly rejects as "radically insufficient"⁹¹ the explanations which have recourse to a physical factor. . . . such as mirage, an attack of fever, hallucination superinduced by fatigue, or the sudden realization of a truth after a prolonged and anguished search, or the futility of legal justice.⁹²

M. Goguel, however, has an explanation of his own—naturalistic of course. The conversion and the vision of our Lord experienced by St. Paul were the natural culmination of a lengthy but unconscious struggle in the soul of the future apostle. He, however, had not the slightest inkling of what was going on, for it all transpired in his "subliminal ego," or in the mysterious depths of subconsciousness. When the struggle reached its crisis, the hidden, unconscious conviction of the truth of Christianity exploded into the field of consciousness and objectivated itself in a vision. All this happened with such utter suddenness that it was entirely unforeseen, and since it was in total contradiction to Paul's entire past conscious views and convictions, it seemed to him to be miraculous—the result of divine intervention.⁹³

⁹⁰ *Op. cit.*, p. 18.

⁹¹ *La Foi en La Resurrection de Jésus dans le Christianisme Primitif* (1933) reviewed by Père Lagrange in *Revue Biblique*, Oct. 1933, pp. 569 ff.

⁹² *Op. cit.*, p. 468.

⁹³ *Ibid.*, pp. 425-429.

Isn't it wonderful what the modern psychologist can do? With what truly marvelous—dare we say miraculous—clairvoyance he is endowed! What was so deeply buried in the "subliminal ego" of Paul that he didn't have the slightest suspicion of what was going on there, is clearly discerned nearly two thousand years later by M. Goguel and described in great detail. Surely M. Maurice Goguel must be in possession of a fabulous time machine, such as the comic-strip artist, Hamlin, has so fantastically created in "Alley Oop," which can hurl him back into remote antiquity, but M. Goguel's is far more wonderful, for it projects him into the mysterious recesses of the great apostle's "subliminal ego" where with divine insight⁹⁴ he clearly sees just what went on there almost two thousand years ago. He sees in the mind of the apostle what St. Paul himself never saw either before or after his conversion.

Seriously, however, we cannot bring ourselves to believe that any sane man can be utterly unaware of what transpires in his soul, as was, if M. Goguel be correct, the case with St. Paul. And in view of the apostle's sincerity, of the strength of mind with which he was endowed, of the loyal and persevering devotion to Christ which in spite of the most redoubtable obstacles he manifested all through his life, we cannot bring ourselves to harbor for an instant the thought that St. Paul was possibly the victim of an hallucination.

The naturalistic explanation, whether physiological or psychological, of the great Paul's conversion is utterly inadequate to explain his experience near Damascus. We remain in the company of those conservative Protestants, such as Swete, who writes: "One explanation and one only accounts for all the facts. It is to be found in the belief that Jesus Christ lives and works behind the veil of the visible order; that at the moment when Saul was about to enter upon a fresh course of disastrous hostility to the faith, He exercised the authority which has been committed to Him in heaven and on earth. The vision which arrested Paul was not wholly subjective; it was due to the direct action on his mind of a Force external to himself which he could not resist, and in which he recognized the Person of the

⁹⁴ Reading the secrets of hearts is a peculiarly divine prerogative. Cf., 1 Sam. 16:7; 1 Par. 28:9; Job 16:20; Ps. 43:21-22; Eccclus. 7:5; 23:2,8; 1 Kgs. 8:3,9; Ps. 138:3.

risen Lord.”⁹⁵ The negative critic, instead of proposing naturalistic explanations which are obviously unsatisfactory and do violence to historical data, should take the attitude of Nock who says: “It was a drastic psychological crisis which we cannot explain.”⁹⁶ We could not but have more respect for the rationalistic critics if they were all so modest, and relinquished their futile and at times plainly ludicrous efforts to explain St. Paul’s conversion, while rigorously excluding the supernatural from their explanation. As Bauman says: “The apparition of Damascus permits the negative critic but one attitude: humility in the face of the unexplainable, respect for powerful evidence which he will never be able to weaken. This miracle, this sudden total transformation of a soul, goes beyond the history of Paul; it dominates all times and places—the authentic sign of the pity of God who is at pains to seek revolting mankind and arrest it in its flight.”⁹⁷

The following paragraph from Karl Adam’s “The Son of God” is a fitting conclusion to the foregoing study:

Is it thinkable that what the original apostles and Paul had to tell was only their visionary experiences in Galilee and that they were naïve enough to take these hallucinations of theirs for realities. It is unthinkable that the living God should permit such a thing. It is unthinkable that all the moral power, all the enthusiasm of sacrifice, all the earnest purity of intention, all the love of God, which entered the hearts of men with the Easter miracle and are ever descending on them, should be born of the sombre womb of a dreadful self-deception. It is literally the fact that such a self-deception would have to be laid to the charge of God Himself, and all belief in an all-wise, all-good, creative Will would be at an end. Not spirit, but non-spirit, not sense, but non-sense, something alogical, indeed meaningless, something demonic and satanic would be at the back of all reality.

We believe in it (the resurrection) because the most elementary instinct of our mind forbids us to believe that the true sense of the realities of the world is nonsense and nihilism, indeed deviltry.⁹⁸

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⁹⁵ *The Appearances of our Lord after His Passion* (1910), p. 128. Findlay in *HDB.* and J. G. Machen in *Biblical and Theological Studies* by the Members of Princeton Theological Seminary (1912) are of the same opinion.

⁹⁶ *Op. cit.*, p. 73.

⁹⁷ *Op. cit.*, p. 42 f.

⁹⁸ *Tr. Hereford* (1940), p. 232 f.

GIVE PLACE TO THE WRATH (Rom. 12:19)

AN ESSAY IN VERBAL EXEGESIS

REV. EDGAR R. SMOTHERS, S.J., PH.D.

The text we wish to study stands in its context as follows:

Εἰ δυνατὸν τὸ ἐξ ὑμῶν μετὰ πάντων ἀνθρώπων εἰρηνεύοντες· μὴ ἑαυτοὺς ἐκδικοῦντες, ἀγαπητοί, ἀλλὰ δότε τόπον τῇ ὀργῇ, γέγραπται γὰρ Ἐμοὶ ἐκδίκησις, ἐγὼ ἀνταποδώσω, λέγει κύριος.¹

The new translation by the Confraternity of Christian Doctrine, while made upon the Vulgate, reflects careful attention to the Greek: "If it is possible, as far as in you lies, be at peace with all men. Do not avenge yourselves, beloved, but give place to the wrath, for it is written, 'Vengeance is mine; I will repay, says the Lord.'"²

St. Paul's admonition, Δότε τόπον τῇ ὀργῇ, has a generally accepted exegesis, *Give place to the wrath of God*.³ The validity of this interpretation is not self-evident; it is proper that it be put to the test. Consider the words themselves. What would they have meant to Plutarch, a younger contemporary of St. Paul, a serious moralist, a Greek who wrote the literary Koine of his time? As it happens, Plutarch has an essay on the Control of Anger; and this is one of his injunctions concerning it: Δεῖ δὲ μήτε παίζοντας αὐτῇ διδόναι τόπον: *Even in jest, one should not give place to it*.⁴ Plutarch's maxim would have given no difficulty to

¹ Rom. 12:18-19. The participles are pendant. See Blass-Debrunner, *Grammatik des neutestamentlichen Griechisch*⁵ (Göttingen: 1921), §468, no. 2 bis, or Blass, *Grammar of New Testament Greek*, translated by H. St.J. Thackeray (London: 1898), §79, no. 10. I quote the latter: In Rom. 12:9ff., "participles (or adjectives) are appended to each other in an unending series with no possibility of bringing them into any construction. . . . It looks as though St. Paul regarded the descriptive participle (whether ἔστε is mentally supplied or not) as completely equivalent to the imperative."

² *The New Testament*, translated from the Latin Vulgate: a revision of the Challoner-Rheims version edited by Catholic scholars under the patronage of the Episcopal Committee of the Confraternity of Christian Doctrine (Paterson, New Jersey: St. Anthony Guild Press, 1941).

³ So, for example, W. Sanday and A. C. Headlam, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Epistle to the Romans* (International Critical Commentary; Edinburgh: 1895); Hans Litzmann, *An die Römer*³ (Handbuch zum Neuen Testament; Tübingen: 1928); M. J. Lagrange, *Saint Paul Épître aux Romains* (Paris: 1931).

⁴ *Moralia*, 462 B.

St. Paul. Δότε τόπον τῇ ὀργῇ, on the other hand, seems to say just the opposite.

A classical scholar, having ruled out the sense, *Give place to the wrath* of God, has recently thought to find in modern Greek the clue to the Apostle's mind.⁵ Δὸς τόπο τῆς ὀργῆς is an expression of familiar use in the living tongue; and undoubtedly means, *Get over your anger; calm yourself*.⁶ Plutarch would have approved the sentiment; but he would have been startled at the idiom. Nor shall we find a trace of ancient evidence to support its attribution to St. Paul. Whatever the semantic evolution behind the modern expression may be, the original maxim in the Epistle to the Romans ought evidently to be set, if possible, against the normal idiom of its cultural ambient. In the following pages, after noticing the exegetical tradition of the Greek Fathers, we shall observe the phrase, *διδόναι τόπον*, as it is used in the New Testament or in the early Christian era; and the term *ὀργή* or *ῆ ὀργή* in the same range of materials.⁷

I.

Born a little over a century after the death of St. Paul, Origen lived in Alexandria and later in Syria. The Greek Bible has not had a more illustrious interpreter. His Commentary on Romans is preserved to us in the Latin translation of Rufinus. On our text it runs to considerable length:

Hi qui se ipsos non vindicant, quomodo irae locum dent, dupliciter mihi videtur intelligi. Nam et hoc ipso, quod, verbi causa, manum manui non referunt, aut convitio convitium non reddunt, irae illius qui fecit iniuriam pertranseundi et evanescendi locum dederunt. Nemo enim ita rabidus invenietur qui illata iniuria si vicem non recipiat iterum saeviat; sed quasi effuso ac digesto furore necessario mitescit. Est ergo et grande lucrum ubi et multitudo compescitur peccatorum et iniuriam passi patientia probabilis fit apud Deum.

Est autem et hoc modo irae locum dare, quando, pro his quae inferuntur iniuriis, qui peccant, secundum ipsius Pauli sententiam, iram

⁵ Donald Blythe Durham, "Acts xv, 9; Romans xii, 19," *Classical Weekly*, October 19, 1942, p. 29 f. See the footnote following.

⁶ The modern Greek dictionaries, *s.v.* τόπος, were quoted extensively on this phrase by E. R. Smothers, in "A Further Note on Romans xii, 19" (a reply to Professor Durham), *Classical Weekly*, Nov. 29, 1943, p. 77 ff.

On the use of the genitive in modern Greek in place of the ancient dative of indirect object, one may consult A. N. Jannaris, *Historical Greek Grammar* (London: 1897), nos 1242-1247; 1350.

⁷ The writer hopes to present in a future article the Old Testament materials, including apocrypha, on τόπον δίδοναι and ῆ ὀργή.

sibi thesaurizat in die irae, tunc cum reddet Deus unicuique secundum opera sua.⁸ Si ergo nosmetipsos vindicemus, non est magnum quod pro iniuria suscepta reddimus, verbi causa aut palmam pro palma, aut saxum pro saxo, aut pro contumelia sermonis sermonis nihilominus contumeliam. Si vero reservemus ea vindictae Dei, in eo qui laesit nos locum damus irae, illi sine dubio quam sibi ipse suis malis actibus thesaurizat quae de eo in iudicio Dei multo graviores quam nos inferre possumus exigit poenas.⁹

Origen, therefore, admits two interpretations of Δότε τόπον τῇ ὀργῇ: *Give place to the wrath* of an angry man; *Give place to the wrath* of God. He makes no distinction between them of primary and secondary.

In a letter written not later than 375 A.D., St. Basil quotes the words, in explaining to his friend, Theodotus, bishop of Nicopolis, why he made no public rejoinder to the attacks of Eustathius, bishop of Sebaste:

Ὅτι ἐν οὐδὲν ἀπεκρινάμεθα τέως, διὰ τὸ διδαχθῆναι παρὰ τοῦ ἀποστόλου, μὴ ἑαυτοὺς ἐκδικεῖν, ἀλλὰ διδόναι τόπον τῇ ὀργῇ.¹⁰

To these charges, I have hitherto made no reply, because of the Apostle's teaching, not to avenge ourselves, but to give place to the wrath.

The phrase here seems to be used in the sense, *Give place*, for the sake of peace, *to the wrath* of an angry man.

Of the same general period—that is to say of St. Basil's episcopate (370-377 A.D.)—is his manual of asceticism, *Regulae brevius tractatae*. This work consists of more than three hundred questions and their answers, centered around the practice of the evangelical virtues and of monastic discipline. It is an informal production, grown out of the bishop's visitations of his conventual flock.¹¹ Question CCXLIV is to the point:

τί ἐστι τὸ Δότε τόπον τῇ ὀργῇ;

Ἀπόκρισις. Ὅτι τὸ Μὴ ἀντιστῆναι τῷ πονηρῷ, καθὼς γέγραπται, ἀλλὰ καὶ τῷ τύπτοντι ἐπὶ τὴν δεξιὰν σιαγόνα, στρέφει καὶ τὴν ἄλλην,

⁸ See Rom. 2:5-6.

⁹ *Opera Omnia*, edited by C. H. E. Lommatzsch (Berlin: 1831), Vol. VII, p. 322 ff.

¹⁰ *Letters of St. Basil*, in the Loeb Classical Library, edited and translated by R. J. Deferrari (London, New York: 1926-1934), Vol. II, Letter CXXX, p. 292. On the date of this letter, p. 290, note 1.

¹¹ W. K. L. Clarke, *The Ascetic Works of Saint Basil* (London: 1925), p. 17.

καὶ τὸ ἐξῆς· ἡ τὸ "Ὅταν διώκωσιν ὑμᾶς ἐν τῇ πόλει ταύτῃ, φεύγετε εἰς τὴν ἄλλην.¹²

What is the meaning of *Give place to wrath*?

Answer. Either it means *not to resist the one who is evil*, as it is written, *but even unto him who strikes you on the right cheek to turn also the other*, and so on, or, *When men persecute you in this city, flee to the other*.

In appearance there are two interpretations here; but they resolve into one: *Give place to the wrath* of an angry man.

In the same sense, St. John Chrysostom applies the words of Paul to the withdrawal of the patriarch, Isaac, from the unfriendly neighborhood of Abimelech:

Καὶ καθάπερ Δαυὶδ τοῦ Σαοὺλ τὸν φθόνον καταστέλλων διὰ τῆς ἀναχωρήσεως, ἑαυτὸν ὑπεξάγων ἐκείνου τὴν πολλὴν παρεμβεῖτο φλεγμονήν, τὸν αὐτὸν δὴ τρόπον καὶ ὁ δίκαιος οὗτος ἐπλήρου τὸ ἀποστολικὸν ἐκεῖνο λόγιον, Δότε τόπον τῇ ὀργῇ.¹³

And just as David composed Saul's jealousy by going away, and by absenting himself assuaged the height of his passion, in the same manner did this upright man fulfill the Apostle's maxim, *Give place to the wrath*.

Like Basil's use of the quotation in the course of a familiar letter, this allusion in Chrysostom is only in a large sense an exegesis of it. We find his considered opinion in the Homilies on Romans. Having quoted the text in context, he raises the relevant question:

Ποία ὀργῇ; Τῇ τοῦ Θεοῦ. Ἐπειδὴ γὰρ τοῦτο μάλιστα ἐπιθυμεῖ ἰδεῖν ὁ ἀδικηθεὶς, ἐκδικίας ἑαυτὸν ἀπολαύοντα, τοῦτο αὐτὸ μετὰ πολλῆς δίδωσι τῆς περιουσίας· ἂν γὰρ αὐτὸς μὴ ἀμύνῃ, ὁ Θεὸς ἔσται τιμωρός. Συγχώρησον οὖν αὐτῷ, φησὶν, ἐπεξελθεῖν· τοῦτο γὰρ ἔστι, Δότε τόπον τῇ ὀργῇ.¹⁴

What manner of wrath? The wrath of God. For since the one who has suffered wrong desires above all to see himself avenged, this very thing God grants him in superabundance.

¹² *Opera Omnia*, edited by J. Garnier and P. Maran, Benedictines of St. Maur (Paris: 1721-1730), Vol. II, p. 497. For the quotations, see Mt. 5:39; 10:23.

¹³ *Homilies on Genesis*, LII: *Opera Omnia*, Benedictine² (Paris: 1837-1849), Vol. IV, p. 586 ff. [507 E].

¹⁴ *Homily XXII*: *Opera Omnia*, IX, 747 ff. [682 D].

For if he does not defend himself, God will be the avenger. Allow Him therefore, says the Bible, to prosecute the cause. For this is what is meant by the words, *Give place to the wrath*.

Here we meet once more one of the interpretations proposed by Origen: *Give place to the wrath* of God. It is clearly offered by Chrysostom as primary.

In the Greek Catena on Romans, as published in Cramer's collection,¹⁵ this place from Chrysostom, as well as that from Basil's *Regulae*, is quoted along with several other Fathers on the same passage; but these latter are concerned with the words of Paul that follow ours.

Sanday and Headlam, in their Commentary on Romans,¹⁶ at 12:19 quote the Byzantine exegete, Euthymius Zigabenus, who flourished at the beginning of the twelfth century. Euthymius, a monk of Constantinople, made it his merit to follow the tradition of the ancient Fathers. His commentaries, published in modern times at Athens, have the interest of an important monument of the Greek Orthodox tradition.¹⁷ He paraphrases the words, ἀλλὰ δότε τόπον τῇ ὀργῇ as follows: Ἀλλὰ παραχωρεῖτε τῆς ἐκδικήσεως τῇ ὀργῇ τοῦ Θεοῦ, τῇ κρίσει τοῦ Κυρίου.—But withdraw from revenge in favor of the wrath of God, the judgment of the Lord.

This interpretation, *Give place to the wrath* of God, may now be described as of high patristic authority. We know of none before it; it appears with Origen, and is reaffirmed by Chrysostom, whence it enters the Catena, to be adopted by Euthymius. No one is quoted as rejecting it. The interpretation, *Give place to the wrath* of an angry man, was also current. Perhaps St. Basil thought of it as the sole, or at least the primary sense. There is no hint of the development presented by the modern phrase, Δὸς τόπο τῆς ὀργῆς: *Get over your anger*.

II.

The common noun, τόπος, is of ordinary occurrence in the New Testament, and most frequently keeps its proper and primary

¹⁵ J. A. Cramer, *Catena Graecorum Patrum in Novum Testamentum* (Oxford: 1840-1844), Vol. IV, p. 454 ff.

¹⁶ See above, footnote 3.

¹⁷ For a brief biography, see Ἐγκυκλοπαιδικὸν Λεξικόν, (Athens: 1927-1931), *sub nomine*.

sense of *place, locality, spot*. Δὸς τούτῳ τόπον, *Make room for this man*, in the parable of the presumptuous guest,¹⁸ is an example of this sense with διδόναι. In the instance, the place is a dinner couch.

Special applications of τόπος are many. It may mean the place in a book, the post of an official; with the article, it may mean the Holy Place, the Temple. Metaphorically, it may mean, in the New Testament as in ancient Greek generally, *opening, occasion, opportunity*.¹⁹ This sense with διδόναι is illustrated in Eph. 4:27, a passage that bears also on the subject of wrath: "Ὁ ἥλιος μὴ ἐπιδυνέτω ἐπὶ παροργισμῷ ὑμῶν, μηδὲ δίδοτε τόπον τῷ διαβόλῳ. Let not the sun go down upon your wrath; and give no place to the devil.

There are several examples of τόπον διδόναι in Greek authors of the non-Christian world that surrounded the New Testament writers. We have glanced at one from Plutarch, and must examine it more closely in a moment. First in logical order is this case from Epictetus, who was Plutarch's contemporary, and gave his discourses in Koine:

Δὸς ἄλλοις τόπον· δεῖ γενέσθαι καὶ ἄλλους, καθάπερ καὶ σὺ ἐγένου. Make room for others; yet others must be born, even as you were born.²⁰

Τόπον διδόναι here is hardly metaphorical; it is a natural extension of its proper sense, and a suggestive parallel to Luke's Δὸς τούτῳ τόπον.

Δεῖ δὲ μήτε παίζοντας αὐτῇ διδόναι τόπον, says Plutarch, in his essay on the Control of Anger; ἔχθραν γὰρ ἐπάγει τῇ φιλοφροσύνῃ.²¹ This, in Wytttenbach's revision of Xylander's translation, is rendered: *Proinde irae neque inter iocos dandus est locus, amicitiam enim in odium mutat*.²² We have here a clear case of τόπον διδόναι in the metaphorical sense, *give occasion*, parallel to Μηδὲ δίδοτε τόπον τῷ διαβόλῳ in the Epistle to the Ephesians.²³

¹⁸ Lk. 14:9.

¹⁹ Liddell and Scott, *Greek-English Lexicon*, new edition by H. S. Jones (Oxford: 1940), s.v.

²⁰ *Discourses*, reported by Arrian, IV, i, 106. I have used the edition and translation of W. A. Oldfather, in the Loeb Classical Library (London and New York: 1928). ²¹ *Moralia* 462 B.

²² *Moralia*, edited by D. Wytttenbach (Oxford: 1795-1829), Vol. II, part ii, p. 884.

²³ 4:27. For τόπον with ποιεῖν in this sense, see Plutarch, *De Hero-*

There remains an example of exceptional interest in a text preserved to us on a papyrus of the third century, relating the trial of the Alexandrian gymnasiarch, Isidore, before the Emperor Claudius. This famous document of ancient anti-Semitism, although subject to the anonymous revisions of those who cherished such "acts of the pagan martyrs," represents very probably a contemporary report of the trial itself, in the year 40 or 50 A.D. The style is markedly popular. At the end of the hearings, when the death sentence had been pronounced, Isidore's fellow convict, Lampon, says to him: Τί γὰρ ἄλλο ἔχομεν ἢ παραφρονούντι βασιλεῖ τόπον διδόναι;²⁴ *For what else can we do but give place to a demented king?* Lampon, however bitterly, is saying that the time for resistance is over. It seems natural to take his τόπον διδόναι in the sense, *to give way, to make room, to yield*, which is so closely analogous to the physical act itself of giving place.²⁵ Positively to give occasion, which was the force of the example cited from Plutarch, would be here inappropriate.

We may conclude that τόπον διδόναι with the dative in the Koine of the New Testament period, and in the New Testament itself, has its plain, unidiomatic sense of physically *giving place* to another, *making room* for another; and that its metaphorical use swings slightly, according to context, between the positive sense of *offering occasion* to another, and the negative sense of *yield-*

doti Malignitate, 864 C. Herodotus brings the golden gear into the story, says Plutarch, χώραν καὶ τόπον ποιῶν ἐν ᾧ θήσεται τὴν Ἀμεινοκλέους παιδοφονίαν.

²⁴ B. G. U. (*Aegyptische Urkunden aus den Königlichen Museen zu Berlin*) II (1898), no. 511 + P. Cairo 10448. The Cairo papyrus was first edited by Theodore Reinach in *Revue des études juives* XXXI (1895), pp. 161-177. See the revised edition of Ulrich Wilcken, *Chrestomathie der Papyruskunde* (Berlin: 1912), no. 14, col. III, 1. 14f.; for further remark, the same, *Grundzüge der Papyruskunde* (Berlin: 1912), p. 44 ff. I have incorporated the editorial corrections into the text.

²⁵ H. I. Bell, in *Juden und Griechen in Römischen Alexandria* (Beihefte zum Alten Orient, Heft 9; Leipzig: 1927), p. 29, translates as follows: "Was können wir weither tun als einem verrückten Herrscher zu weichen." F. Preisigke, *Wörterbuch der griechischen Papyruskunden* (Berlin: 1925), s.v., τόπος *ad finem*, cites τόπον διδόναι in this passage, and defines it, *Gelegenheit bieten*. So W. Bauer, *Griechisch-Deutsches Wörterbuch zu den Schriften des Neuen Testaments* (Berlin: 1937). I have indicated my agreement with Bell.

ing. This last is the meaning most suitable to the patristic interpretations, which we have seen above, of Romans 12:19.

III

The further question now presents itself, in St. Paul's admonition, *Δότε τόπον τῇ ὀργῇ*, whose is the wrath? By widening the inquiry, we may find solid grounds for an answer. When *ὀργή* or *ἡ ὀργή* occurs in the New Testament literature without precise indication of its logical subject, what light falls on the case from the aggregate of all the uses of the word?

All examples of *ὀργή* in the New Testament are cited in Bauer's *Wörterbuch*, in Zorell's *Lexicon*, and in Moulton and Geden's *Concordance*.²⁶ They are classified by the lexicons under two main heads, the wrath of man, and the wrath of God. It is a striking fact that only six examples belong to the former class; while of the latter there are five times as many. Of the six, one is of the anger of Christ (Mk. 3:5).²⁷ The others are directly or indirectly warnings against wrath (Eph. 4:31; Col. 3:8; 1 Tim. 2:8; Jas. 1:19-20).

The term, *ὀργή*, under the second head, is in twelve cases expressly modified through a noun or pronoun as of God, or of the Lamb, or of both. (τοῦ Θεοῦ, Jn. 3:36; Eph. 5:6; Col. 3:6; Apoc. 19:15. Θεοῦ, Rom. 1:18. μου, Heb. 3:11; 4:3: both quotations of Ps. 94:11. σου, Apoc. 11:18. αὐτοῦ, Apoc. 14:10; 16:19. τοῦ Ἀρνίου, Apoc. 6:16. αὐτῶν, 6:17).

In six further cases of this class, God is so designated in the context as to be the natural term of reference of *ὀργή*. (Rom. 2:8; 3:5; 9:22, twice; 13:4; 1 Thess. 5:9).

In seven cases the phrase is eschatological. This use, familiar as it is, deserves emphasis, for in almost every instance it is a clear case of referring *ὀργή* to God not by virtue of an immediate context, for this is not clearly determined, but on the broad basis of biblical ideas expressed in biblical style. *Τῆς μελλούσης ὀργῆς*

²⁶ Bauer, as cited in the preceding footnote; F. Zorell, *Lexicon Graecum Novi Testamenti*² (Paris: 1931); W. F. Moulton and A. S. Geden, *A Concordance of the Greek Testament according to the texts of Westcott and Hort, Tischendorf, and the English Revisers*, (third edition, Edinburgh: 1926).

²⁷ Variant readings of Lk. 6:10, in Codex Bezae and other sources, yield a further instance of *ὀργή*. *Ἐν ὀργῇ* is adopted by von Soden; Tischendorf, and Westcott and Hort omit. The place is parallel to Mk. 3:5.

occurs in Matthew 3:7, and in its parallel, Lk. 3:7; ἔσται . . . ὀργή τῷ λαῷ τούτῳ is from Christ's eschatological discourse, Lk. 21:23; τῆς ὀργῆς τῆς ἐρχομένης, 1 Thess. 1:10; ὀργὴν ἐν ἡμέρᾳ ὀργῆς (ὀργή twice), Rom. 2:5. Another example ἡ ἡμέρα ἡ μεγάλη τῆς ὀργῆς αὐτῶν, Apoc. 6:17 is equally eschatological; but the wrath of God and of the Lamb is expressly defined by αὐτῶν. In the other cases, the divine reference is left to the reader's understanding.

Four examples of ὀργή remain, of those classified by the lexicons under the wrath of God. Each merits individual attention; for in none of them is the immediate context precise. In Rom. 5:9 St. Paul writes of those who are justified through Christ: Σωθησόμεθα δι' αὐτοῦ ἀπὸ τῆς ὀργῆς. It is a luminous example of the absolute, ἡ ὀργή, meaning the wrath of God.

In the same Epistle, 4:15, the reader is expected to know, without special assistance, whose wrath is in question, just as he is expected to know what Law: Ὁ γὰρ νόμος ὀργὴν κατεργάζεται

So in Eph. 2:3, he would understand τέκνα ὀργῆς without a commentary: Καὶ ἡμεῖς²⁸ τέκνα φύσει ὀργῆς, ὡς καὶ οἱ λοῖποί. The figure of speech is highly biblical, like מְתֵי־מָוֶת *sons of death*, in 1 Kgs. 26:16. The children of wrath are those who deserve the wrath of God.

In 1 Thess. 2:16, St. Paul writes of the enemies of the Gospel: Ἐφθασεν δὲ ἐπ' αὐτοὺς ἡ ὀργὴ εἰς τέλος. This is the reading of the critical editions,²⁹ as well as that of the *textus receptus*. It can leave no doubt as to the seat and source of the wrath. The thought is made explicit in the reading, ἡ ὀργὴ τοῦ Θεοῦ, which is found in D (Claromontanus) and in its relatives, EFG, and is re-enforced by the Old Latin, Vulgate Latin, and Gothic.³⁰ Origen quotes the text without τοῦ Θεοῦ in his Commentaries on the Psalms, again in his Commentaries on Matthew, and a third time, in an excerpt preserved in the Catenae.³¹ St. Jerome, in

²⁸ ἡμεῖς for ἡμεν. Both forms occur in the New Testament. (F. M. Abel, *Grammaire du grec biblique* (Paris: 1927), §20 f.

²⁹ Tischendorf, Westcott and Hort, von Soden, Merk. None of them expresses uncertainty.

³⁰ In addition to the editors of the Greek text, see Wordsworth and White, *Novum Testamentum Latine* II, v (Oxford: 1937; H. F. D. Sparks editor), *ad. loc.*

³¹ Tischendorf⁸, in his apparatus *ad loc.*, writes, "Orbis Eusaepē." My statement rests on the printed editions, as follows: Origen, *Opera Omnia*, edited by C. H. E. Lommatsch (Berlin: 1831-1848), Vol. XI, p. 400; IV,

his Commentaries, quotes the text with *ira Dei* once, on Ezechiel; without *Dei* twice, once on Isaias and once on Jeremias.³² The long reading may be very simply accounted for as an exegetical derivative, once the Bible had passed into a world not steeped in biblical style. The point for our purpose is that ἡ ὀργή, unqualified, is a well established reading in this verse for the wrath of God.³³

In the light of all the evidence, which is so pertinent and so abundant, it is permitted to conclude that ἡ ὀργή in the New Testament is used pre-eminently of the wrath of God. In an eschatological context, without further precision, the term is so understood as a matter of course; it is repeatedly so used in other phrases with nothing but the general analogy of biblical style to define its force.³⁴ It follows that if such a sense is particularly apt to the case of Romans 12:19, there is good ground for admitting it.

Let us reassure ourselves of the context:

Εἰ δυνατόν τὸ ἐξ ὑμῶν μετὰ πάντων ἀνθρώπων εἰρηνεύοντες· μὴ ἑαυτοὺς ἐκδικοῦντες, ἀγαπητοί, ἀλλὰ δότε τόπον τῇ ὀργῇ, γέγραπται γὰρ Ἑμοὶ ἐκδίκησις, ἐγὼ ἀνταποδώσω, λέγει κύριος.

120 f.; *Werke*, Bruchstücke aus Catenen, edited by E. Preuschen (Berlin Corpus, Origenes IV, Leipzig: 1903), p. 525.

³² MPL 25, col. 66; 24, col. 481; 25, col. 1522.

³³ St. Paul's words in this passage are substantially identical with those of a Jewish apocryphon, Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs, the original composition of which antedates the Christian era. In the Testament of Levi, vi, 11, the Patriarch pronounces sentence on the Schechemites: ἔφθασε δὲ αὐτοὺς (v.l. ἐπὶ αὐτοὺς) ἡ ὀργὴ τοῦ Θεοῦ εἰς τέλος. See R. H. Charles, *Greek Versions of the Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs* (Oxford: 1908), *ad loc.* A number of the Greek manuscripts have κυρίου for τοῦ θεοῦ, and a group of Armenian manuscripts omit. This textual case history suggests comparisons with what we have seen for the parallel text in St. Paul. Neither the literary nor the textual history, however, of the Testaments, is so firmly established as to warrant decisive assertions. The text of 1 Thess. 2:16, rests on its own foundations.

³⁴ So in Rom. 2:18, τὸ θέλημα is used without further definition, meaning the will of God. A striking use of this noun without even the article in this sense has recently appeared in Melito's Homily on the Passion. See Campbell Bonner, *Homily on the Passion by Melito of Sardis*, Studies and Documents, edited by Kirsopp Lake and Silva Lake, XII (London: 1940), p. 137, l. 25 f. Professor Bonner calls attention, in his footnote on the passage (p. 138) to Romans, as above, and to a number of important parallels from Ignatius of Antioch.

The marked antithesis between *μὴ ἑαυτοὺς ἐκδικοῦντες* and *Ἐμοὶ ἐκδίκησις*, immediately preceding and immediately following *δότε τόπον τῇ ὀργῇ*, combines with the accepted force of *ἡ ὀργή* to lend exceptional sanction to the sense, *Give place to the wrath* of God, a sense most appropriate in itself, and in perfect harmony with the passage as a whole. It is not surprising that this should be the accepted exegesis of the lexicons and of the commentators.³⁵ We have seen that it enjoys solid support in the tradition of the Greek Fathers. Plutarch, I dare say, would have had no difficulty with it, given a moment's enlightenment on the ordinary place in biblical spirituality of the Wrath.

The materials with which we have concerned ourselves in this study seem to the writer definitely to supersede, for the exegesis of Romans 12:19, the modern Greek saying, *Δὸς τόπο τῆς ὀργῆς*. This popular adaptation of the Pauline text retains, however, a stimulating interest of its own. It would be instructive to see its life history fully unfolded. It is certain, as we have seen, that *ἡ ὀργή* is here the anger of the subject of the verb; and that the phrase as a whole means, *Get over your anger; Be calm*. By way of plausible conjecture, this might be paraphrased: *Give place to the wrath* to pass away.³⁶ That such a sense could have risen as a natural corollary of the biblical maxim is evident. When St. Paul admonishes his readers, *Do not avenge yourselves, beloved, but give place to the wrath* of God, he also says, in effect, *Calm your own wrath; let it pass away*.

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³⁵ So Bauer, Zorell, and the new Liddell and Scott, *s.v.*, *τόπος*; J. H. Moulton and G. Milligan, *The Vocabulary of the Greek Testament illustrated from the papyri and other non-literary sources* (London, New York, Toronto: 1914-1929), *s.v.*, *ὀργή*, as follows: "In Romans xii, 19, the substantive should be personified, 'Make room for the Wrath (the Divine Retribution which alone can do justice on wrong).'" For various commentators, see above, footnote 3.

³⁶ Origen, in his commentary on the text, does not admit the reflexive force of the phrase; but he recognizes the possibility of interpreting it in the sense: *Give place to the adversary's wrath* to pass away. Those who refrain from vengeance, he says, *irae illius qui fecit iniuriam pertranseundi et evanescendi locum dederunt*.

CHRIST'S RESURRECTION AND THE DYING AND RISING GODS

REV. GEORGE C. RING, S.J.

"His resurrection linked him in function and prestige with the company of dying and rising gods popular in the Mediterranean world."¹ The sentence occurs in a recent history of religions, whose author is explaining how the early Christian community transfigured its Founder into a Divine Person. Like many another in the course of the same explanation, the sentence has the demonstrative value only of facile assertion. Surely, if a comparison is to be drawn between the Risen Christ and all that He meant to His followers on the one hand and the dying and rising gods and what their votaries saw in them on the other, logic forbids stopping at mere surface resemblance and coincidence of names. The objects to be compared must be brought into closer juxtaposition and examined point for point before a judgement is warranted as to their likeness. In fact, the irresponsible assertions of "borrowing," "adaptation," "survival" which are made in popular, and unhappily even in erudite, histories of religions spring commonly from a phobia of such careful point for point comparison.

Some of the early converts from Gentilism would have known of the gods of the mysteries, but these newly born in Christ entered the Church not to teach, but to be taught. They sought the milk of doctrine from the one fount recognized as pure—the apostolic tradition.² When later the more gifted of these same converts became the Church's apologists, their references to the

¹ *Biography of the Gods* by A. Eustace Haydon (Macmillan: 1941), p. 253.

² Sufficient emphasis is rarely laid on the fact that Christianity was preached as a wholly new doctrine. Such it was in the thought of Apostles, Apologists and Fathers, who acknowledged dependence neither on natural religions by way of syncretism nor on natural philosophies by way of premise or preparation, but professed themselves custodians and teachers of strict revelation. Nor did the Gentiles think otherwise, for to them, wearied by the endless disputes of philosophers and stifled in the morass of myth and superstition, Christianity came as an unprecedented experience, as pure air and sunshine for the soul. Karl Prümm, S.J., has developed this theme convincingly in his *Christentum als Neuheitserlebnis* (Herder: Freiburg, 1939).

pagan mysteries fell into two classes. Mithraism and the rest either were execrated as vile and idle superstitions or were openly charged with having borrowed what good features they possessed from Christianity.

So stands the general argument against the likelihood that the Church was minded to associate in any way the Resurrection of Christ with pagan "prototypes." It is rather to the particular question of asserted resemblance between the belief in "dying and rising gods" and the faith in Christ's Resurrection that an answer is here essayed. Now, the content of the Christian faith is an historical individual who, being dead, rose from the grave and proposed his own gloriously risen body as a pledge of the corporal resurrection of his followers. Were the dying and rising gods such in the belief of paganism? Were they historical persons? Is a corporal resurrection claimed for them? Did faith see in them the "*primitiae dormientium*," an exemplar and pledge of the future corporal resurrection of their votaries?

Mediterranean faith in dying and rising gods was directed chiefly towards five divine worthies. They were Osiris, Tammuz, Attis, Persephone, and Dionysus Zagreus. With the exception of the last, each of these was associated with a goddess—wife, sister, mother, or lover—whose emotions in the loss and recovery of her darling were a model for the emotions which the ritual of the cult aimed to arouse in the devotees. With the exception again of Dionysus Zagreus, the different cults exhibit notable similarities. It is not safe, however, to argue hence to any closer interdependence of the religions of Osiris, Tammuz, Attis, and Persephone than that of origin in a common religious emotion. The emotion in question would be belief in some divine power manifesting itself in the phenomena of autumnal decay and vernal rebirth of vegetation.

Evidence for the historical existence of Osiris is most tenuous. According to the myth, he and his sister Isis were born of Earth and Sky. Wedding his sister, he became the first ruler of the then savage Egyptians, whom he taught reverence for the gods and a wise code of laws. He taught them, too, to train the vine and to grow fruit-trees, to plant wheat and barley. He thus ranks as a culture-hero, and it is not impossible that in Egypt's pre-history there was an Osiris who fostered the arts of life among

the people. It is commonplace for mythographers to clothe just such culture-heroes in the bright robes of legend.

The Osiris myth, whether it contains the above euhemeristic element or not, is a vegetation myth. In very old pictures plants are shown growing out of the body of Osiris. He is the Nile which gives fertility to Egypt, and his death is the recession of the waters. Set, his murderer, is the desert which threateningly presses in upon the fertile alluvial plain, whose hot breath was thought to dry up the river's waters. It readily appears why Osiris was a great god in Egypt. It was inevitable that, among a people so preoccupied with eschatology as were the Egyptians, Osiris should become the arbiter of the future fates of men. In earliest written records he appears as a god of the dead. Some of these Pyramid Texts voice terror lest he snatch away the deceased ruler into his shadowy netherworld; others address him as one of the gods who will greet the Pharaoh on his ascent to Re's heaven.³ Osiris, however, soon attained a complete monopoly of eschatological functions. Into his power the Egyptian passed at death, body and soul. Mortuary priests and their assistants made of the process of mummification a re-enacting of the process of preparation of Osiris' body by Isis and her helpers. Through the efficacy of magical formulas the body's members were assimilated to the members of Osiris' body. The most sacred of the formulas, that for Opening the Mouth, was understood to bring the dead man to a new life in Osiris' Afterworld. When the mummy was completely swathed, it was placed in a coffin adorned with a portrait of the deceased wearing the Osirian beard and holding the Osirian symbols.

Rightly read, the myth asserts for Osiris himself no more than this funeral preparation and magical transmission into life in the Afterworld. Thoth, the god potent in magic, and Isis, a great magician in her own right, through occult arts reunite Osiris' dismembered body and fan life into it. But what manner of life? Certainly not that of a living king of Egypt; much less that of a glorified body such as Christ's. Osiris received that fanciful animation effected by mortuary priests when they uttered the spell for Opening the Mummy's Mouth. Osiris never

³ The so-called Pyramid Texts are a medley of prayers and charms carved on the interior walls of royal pyramids of the late Fifth and early Sixth Dynasties (about 2675-2550 B.C.)

lived again on the banks of the Nile, but was said to have exchanged his role of earthly king for that of king and judge of the dead. His statues and pictures are always mummiform, in uniform testimony to the kind of "resurrection" ascribed to him.

Ptolemy Soter (323-285) effected a fusion of Osirianism with the Eleusinian religion of Demeter-Persephone-Dis. In this modified form, the ancient Egyptian cult spread around the shores of the Mediterranean, never however dropping its panoply of Egyptian symbols and observances, nor losing its two essential characteristics of propitiation on the one hand of the spirit of vegetation and on the other of a god potent in the Afterworld. Isis grew in popularity at the expense of Osiris and by a process common enough to later paganism took over not only his functions but those of many other divinities. In Apuleius' phrase she was "*deorum dearumque facies uniformis*" (*Metamorphoses*, Lib. XI). In particular, it was she now, and not Serapis (as Osiris was called), who promised to the initiate of her mysteries a happy future lot. Yet, one still looks in vain for even a hint of corporal resurrection in this later religion of Isis. Its supreme eschatological concept is voiced by the goddess in her address to Apuleius' Lucius:

When after thy allotted space of life thou descendest into hell, there thou shalt see me in that subterranean firmament shining in the darkness of Acheron and reigning in the deep profundity of Styx, and thou shalt worship me as one that hath been favorable to thee.⁴

The prehistoric king-list of Erech places Dumu-zi (probably meaning "faithful son") fourth in order and calls him "the fisherman whose city was Eridu." This would be the city of the water-god Enki-Ea, and the threnodies frequently refer to Tammuz and Ishtar as son and daughter of Ea. The claim of earthly kingship is also made for Tammuz in the litanies, which address him as *ilitti biti*, offspring of the house, *sc.* of the legitimate line of divinely appointed kings. The same litanies invoke him under the names of numerous kings of Ur and Isin. To this nebulous evidence of Tammuz' historicity may be added the much later assertions of certain Christian and Arabic writers that he was a human king whom another king slew. Such writers refer, perhaps, to a custom once honored by the Western Semites of

⁴ *Metamorphoses*, Bk. XI.

sacrificing the king as a propitiatory victim in time of plague or other heavenly visitation. Eusebius says that the custom was for the king to sacrifice his favorite child.⁵

It is just possible, then, that by a process of euhemerism the name of some ancient king of the Tigris-Euphrates valley became associated with the myth and cult so popular there. Be that as it may, there can be no doubt as to the origin of the cult in pure nature-worship, and specifically in the vegetation-cycle. There is first the compelling analogy of such cults as those of Isis-Osiris and Demeter-Persephone. Secondly, the fourth month of the Babylonian calendar was Duzu; (cf. Dumuw-zi above and the corresponding Hebrew month Tammuz). Corresponding partly to our June and partly to our July, this month seasonally marked the end of summer, and it was during Duzu that the valley echoed to the laments for the lost Tammuz. In the month next following, namely in Abu, occurred a holy day commemorating Ishtar's descent into Arallu, the Babylonian Hades. In connection with Tammuz' death, it is significant that he is said to have "perished in the waters"—a notion to be expected in a land where low water in the two great rivers brought on the killing drought. Furthermore, the naturistic origin of Tammuz cult is indicated in the god's equation with the sun-god (Enmesharra or Nergal). For in popular belief the sun-god during Kislimu and Tebetu (December and January) also fared to the Netherworld and he was bewailed by threnodies similar to those of Tammuz. Because of this equation the Phoenicians eagerly welcomed Tammuz to their sun-god city of Gebal, where he was known as Aduni (my god, the Adonis of the Greek).

A coherent account of the myth from Tigris-Euphrates documents is still wanting. The fragments add up to about the following total. Tammuz is referred to as a herdsman who dies and goes to the "land of no return," where rules the goddess Allatu. The cause of his death is not clear, but one text may indicate that Ishtar herself did him to death, for Gilgamesh thus reproaches her: "On Tammuz, the spouse of thy youth, from year to year affliction didst thou lay." At any rate, she fares to the Netherworld (in search of him?), where she is despoiled of

⁵ On Tammuz as a prehistoric king, cf., S. H. Langdon in *Mythology of All Races*, Vol. V., pp. 341-344; 345-347. On the sacrifice of the king, cf. Sir. J. G. Frazer in *Attis, Adonis, Osiris*, Ch. V.

her raiment and mocked by Allatu. All life on the upper earth is withering away during her absence, so that Allatu is forced by the other gods reluctantly to release her. From this point on, to quote S. H. Langdon:

The Accadian texts are in great confusion and the Sumerian version for the remainder of the legend is illegible. In any case, Tammuz still remained in Arallu. The goddess of Hell instructed her messenger Nantar:

Tammuz, the husband of her youth
Wash with clean water, anoint with fine oil.
With a dazzling garment clothe him,
Let him play the flute of lapis lazuli.
May the harlots appease his soul.⁶

The henotheism which exalted Marduk of Babylon, and later Assur of the Assyrians, caused Tammuz to lose ground in the valley. It was in the lands of his adoption rather than of his birth that he retained and augmented his popularity. Syria, Greece, and the countries of Asia Minor, finding that his cult aptly symbolized the natural mystery of decay of old life and birth of new, substituted it for their own observances or amalgamated it with them. Syria, it seems, solarized Tammuz and Ishtar. The Greeks embellished the jejune Babylonian myth and wove it into the texture of the Homero-Hesiodic myth-cycle. The amours of Ishtar and Tammuz became the theme of an extensive Adonic poetry. Jeremias and Ezechiel tell of Tammuz cult among the Hebrews.⁷

Wherever Ishtar and Tammuz migrated throughout the Mediterranean basin, their worship remained essentially unchanged. The piercing cries of the disheveled votaries, the sweet threnodies of Bion and Moschus, the gifts heaped around the magnificent catafalque of Adonis—all are expressions of the same religious emotion which stirred the old Babylonians in the month of Duzu.

⁶ *Mythology of All Races*, Vol. V, p. 334. The stories of Gilgamesh's rencounter with Ishtar and of Ishtar's descent into Arallu are found in the collection, *Cuneiform Inscriptions of Western Asia*, Vol. IV.

⁷ "Seest thou not what they do in the cities of Juda and in the streets of Jerusalem? The children gather wood, and the fathers kindle the fire, and the women knead the dough, to make cakes for the queen of heaven (Ishtar), and to offer libations to strange gods" (Jer. 7:17,18). "And he brought me in by the door of the Lord's house which looked to the north and, behold, women sat there mourning for Adonis (Tammuz in the Hebrew text)" (Ez. 8:14).

Pagan man mourns the passing of the summer's vegetation which in his ignorance he has divinized and anthropomorphized. Though religionists may talk loosely, his votaries never knew Tammuz-Adonis as an expiatory victim for sin, who endured a "passion" in order to win through to a glorious resurrection for himself and for them.

The Great Mother of the Gods was first worshipped in Asia Minor, from one of whose mountains she derived her usual name of Cybele. She was a goddess from whom all life proceeded, who is pictured with attendant lions and whose favorite shrines were in caves and on mountains. References in the Homeric Hymns as well as monumental evidence date her cult earlier than the sixth century, but her association with Attis is not certified before the fifth century. One may not speak apodictically in the matter, but there are strong indications that Attis was the Tammuz-Adonis of the Semites and that Lydia, which grew to imperial rank in the sixth century, introduced him to Asia Minor and got him accepted as Cybele's "amasius." Certainly, the Cybele-Attis cult differed from that of Ishtar and Tammuz merely in ritualistic details. The picturesque excesses of the Galli in their mad grief were only refinements on the old threnodic theme of Sumerians and Babylonians who wailed the loss of Tammuz. When Cybele's popularity was at its apex in the Empire of the first and second centuries A.D., her ritual had grown highly elaborate and the Galli had been organized into a regular hierarchy. All this may well be explained by the free interchange of spectacular ritualistic observances between the various mystery-religions and by imitation of the governmental organization of the Empire.

Herodotus speaks of Atys, son of Croesus, the king of Lydia, being killed by a spear which was aimed at a boar (I, 43). There is a faint possibility that the name of this unfortunate youth may have been intruded into the Semitic religious legend as told in Lydia, replacing the name of Tammuz. There are other slight indications that fragments of history were mixed by a process of euhemerism with the religious legend. Diodorus Siculus makes the Great Mother a daughter of a king of Lydia and Attis her lover a commoner whom the irate king slays. Afflicted by a plague, the people pay divine honors to the princess (III, 58, 59). Firmicus Maternus says that the original of the Great Mother

was a rich widow enamored of the beautiful youth Attis, on whom she wreaked her spite when her love was spurned (*De Errore*, 3). In its classical form, as told by Pausanias and retold with minor variations by the Christian Arnobius, the legend abounds in fantastic and revolting details. From the seed of Zeus springs the monster Agdistis, whom the other gods emasculate. From the severed parts grows an almond-tree, whose fruit makes pregnant the daughter of the river-god Sangarius. When her child Attis matures into a comely stripling, he is the object of the passionate love both of Agdistis and of Cybele, (the latter being the offspring of Deucalion and Pyrrha). While his nuptials to king Midas' daughter are being celebrated, Agdistis breaks in uninvited upon the feast and infects the bridegroom with madness. In his frenzy Attis emasculates himself and dies, but Cybele persuades Zeus to keep his corpse incorrupt and entombs it at her shrine in Pessinus, where violets spring from the tomb.⁸

Entering Rome during the Hannibalic war and establishing herself within the sacred Pomerium, Cybele grew in popular favor throughout the later Republic and the Empire.⁹ It is not strange, then, that from Lucretius onward we find a wealth of interpretation of the meaning of her cult from the pens of Roman religionists. Lucretius, Sallust, Porphyrius among the pagans, Arnobius and Firmicus Maternus among the Christians interpret myth and cult as a form of nature-worship in which Cybele is the Earth-mother and Attis the vegetation which each year flourishes only to wither away.¹⁰ Of higher religious content in the Cybele-Attis religion—of a god's vicarious suffering, of mystic union with him, of a resurrection—these contemporary commentators do not speak. Nor do the ritual observances of the Great Mother, which were colorful enough to draw the attention of classical writers and are described in detail, attest more than nature-worship. An exception might be urged in the case of the Taurobolium. The latter, attested no earlier than 133 A.D., had for its essential feature the bathing of the votary in the warm blood of a sacrificed bull. On the altars which were set up

⁸ Pausanias, I, 4,5. Arnobius, V, 5-8.

⁹ For the cult at Rome, cf., *The Great Mother of the Gods* by Grant Showerman (U. of Wis. Press, 1901) especially pp. 225-230, and Chs. III-VI.

¹⁰ Lucr., II, 600 sqq., Sall. *De Diis et Mundo*, 4; Porph. cited by Augustine in *De Civ. Dei*, VII, 25; Arnob. *Adversus Nationes*, V, 42; Firm. Mat. *De Errore*, 3.

in commemoration of the performance of this rite (in Italy and Gaul between the years 133-400 A.D.) the votaries claim that through it they are "renatus in XX annos" or "renatus in aeternum."¹¹ May one recognize here a doctrine akin to the Christian teaching that Baptism is a going down to death with Christ and a rising to new life with Him? Possibly so, but the date (133 A.D.) clearly indicts who would have borrowed from whom. The likelihood is that the propagandists of the Cybele and Attis cult acquired an imperfect knowledge of rebirth in Christ, borrowed the term *renatus* and attached it clumsily to a pagan purification rite. Confusion of ideas is sufficiently hinted at in the gauche phrase "renatus in XX annos."

To sum up, Attis did not rise from the grave any more than did Osiris or Tammuz, nor did his votaries see in him a pledge of their own corporal resurrection. Highest hope of the "mystes" was that, through his initiation into her mysteries and fidelity to her observances, he would gain the Great Mother as his protectress in the darkness of Acheron. (Cf. p. 219 above).

Dionysius Zagreus, a wholly mythological figure, became important in ancient religion through association with the so-called Orphic rites and with Neoplatonic speculation. Briefest mention of the monstrous myth will suffice; how Zeus' child Dionysus was torn to pieces by the Titans; how the dismembered body was reunited and brought to life again by Rhea (or Apollo); how Zeus wreaked vengeance on the Titans. St. Justin and Origen add the detail that after his "resurrection" Dionysus Zagreus ascended into heaven. In another version of the myth Dionysus is devoured by the Titans, only his heart being saved by Athene: Zeus places the heart in a gypsum statue of his son, destroys the Titans with his thunderbolt: from their ashes spring up the first men. A variation of this latter account makes Zeus (or Semele) devour the heart and then bring forth a new Dionysus.

St. Clement of Alexandria in a context which speaks of the myth and mysteries of Dionysus calls Orpheus ὁ τῆς τελετῆς ποιητής. Commenting on this and similar expressions in other writers, I. M. Linforth indicates the vast amount of religious belief and

¹¹ The Taurobolium was a practice common to several of the oriental mystery-religions. The Vatican Hill was the favorite site for the rite at Rome, numerous taurobolic votive altars having been found there.

practice which was apocryphally attributed to the culture hero Orpheus.¹² In particular, his name and reputed authorship gave respectability to the orgiastic religion of Dionysus which swept into Greece from Thrace. Orpheus was said to have instituted these rites and to have taught that through them immortal life could be secured. Dionysus, so the Orphic teaching said, could be brought to take possession of the votary and assimilate him to the divine substance. Stimulants, choric dance, and song were means employed to excite the nerves and imagination in preparation for the supreme act of the ritual. At the height of the psychopathic frenzy so induced the votaries tore apart and devoured the fawn or hare into which they fancied that the spirit of Dionysus had entered. These ideas of a divine intoxication and of a banquet assimilative to the god were somewhat refined in later days, but persevered substantially to the twilight of paganism. On them was based the hope of immortality. "The shade," says Cumont, "went down into the bowels of the earth, never again to leave them. If judged worthy, it took part in an eternal banquet, of which the initiate received a foretaste on earth in the feasts of the mysteries."¹³ It is needless to comment that any comparison with the Christian hope in the resurrection is strained beyond the limits of plausibility.

Philosophers fastened upon the myth as a *locus communis* which might serve to support their own teaching. For the Stoics Dionysus' dismemberment and restoration to life allegorized the unending natural cycle of dissolution and reintegration (ἐκπύρωσις and διακόσμησις). The Neoplatonists saw in the same a symbol of their doctrine on multiplicity and unity. More to our purpose, the Neoplatonists found in the myth an explanation of the good and evil in human nature. The primal guilt was laid at the door of the Titans, murderous progenitors of the human family. Since, however, the Titans had absorbed by cannibalism the substance of the god Dionysus, their offspring, too, have in themselves a divine and good element. By virtue and by contemplation of truth, the philosophers teach, we may perfect this

¹² The quotation from St. Clement is from the *Protrepticus*, II, 17, 2-18. Linforth discusses the question in his *The Arts of Orpheus* (Univ. of Calif. Press, 1941) pp. 295-306.

¹³ *After Life in Roman Paganism* by Franz Cumont (Yale Univ. Press, 1923), p. 35.

good element and attain union with the divine substance. On these speculations as "sources" of Christian doctrine, it will suffice to quote Linforth.

It may be well to point out that in all the allegorical interpretations of the fortunes of Dionysus his *παλιγγενεσία* is never treated as a figure of the successive births of the human soul or the triumph of the soul over death, but always as a cosmic phenomenon. There is no reason to suppose that the rebirth of Dionysus ever supplied the comforting doctrine that 'we are risen with him.'¹⁴

Dionysus Zagreus' popularity was such that he was admitted to the select circle of Eleusinian gods, among whom he is commonly called Iacchus. Eleusis is a town situated a few miles northwest of Athens. Here from time immemorial had been celebrated agrarian rites under the care of several noble families. Upon the agrarian cult there had been engrafted, at about the dawn of authentic history, a mystery element. In its simplest terms, this mystery element may be described as an interpretation of the myth of the rape of Kore (Persephone), as a symbol of man's death and future state. For Dis was god of the dead, and it was obvious to symbolize death and residence in the Netherworld under the figure of Demeter's daughter snatched away by him. Her rescue was again an obvious symbol of some sort of deliverance for man from the terrors of that shadowy region so dreaded by the life-loving Greek.

In the spring were performed the Little Mysteries, which consisted in rites of purification undergone by the candidates. From September 13 to 20, preparations were made for the Great Mysteries. On the first of these days the sacred objects were carried from Eleusis to the Eleusinion at Athens, where on the following day the Hierophant addressed the candidates in the Painted Colonnade. On September 16, the candidates repaired to the sea-shore at Phalerum to bathe and also to wash the pigs they would offer in sacrifice. The two following days were taken up with the Epidauria, a festival probably commemorative of the fusion of Asklepios' cult with that of Eleusis. On the 19th, a magnificent religious procession formed and carried back to Eleusis the sacred objects, which we conjecture to have been carefully veiled from uninitiated eyes throughout all this pagean-

¹⁴ *The Arts of Orpheus*, p. 358.

try. The candidates fasted on the 20th till nightfall, when they partook of a repast of cakes and meal-water, the latter flavored with pennyroyal.

The repast concluded, the candidates entered upon the initiation proper. Here our certain information as to what was done gives way to conjecture based on the nature of the cult, on analogies in other mystery-religions, on hints dropped by initiates, on diatribes of Christian apologists. Only a tentative reconstruction can therefore be offered. In the Hall of Initiations a vision of the Netherworld followed by one of Heaven stirred up the candidates' emotions. These visions were doubtless fixed scenic effects or acted dramas or perhaps both. The sacred objects were then unveiled before the eyes of those present. What were these objects? St. Hippolytus says that one was a corn-stalk; other authors speak of archaic statues of the gods. The scene then shifted to the Telesterion (Hall of Mysteries), where a drama was enacted, most probably on a theme suggested by the Demeter-Kore-Dis myth. A sacred marriage (probably commemorating Zeus' philandering with Persephone) was then symbolized when the Hierophant and the priestess of Demeter retired from the view of the candidates, to return after an interval at the glad proclamation of a herald: "Brima our lady has borne a sacred child Brimos."

Doubtless those who went on to higher grades of initiation (*ἐπόπται* as opposed to simple *μύσται*) were shown many more spectacles and were indoctrinated with much more esoteric lore. But these advanced devotees have kept the secret well, to which they bound themselves by oath and whose violation involved severe religious and even civil penalties. Despite this silence, it is not too difficult to appraise the ultimate hope that the Eleusinian, and for that matter the other, mysteries held out to the initiates. In the religion of Greece and Rome uncertainty and gloom brooded over the Afterworld. The unhappy wraith wandered in a comfortless subterranean world or revisited the scenes of his earthly life in quest of consolation from his own. Philosophy occasionally essayed such apocalyptic visions as the *Somnium Scipionis*, but offered no strong hope of salvation. The mysteries of the Orient, whatever must be thought of the validity of the claim, made unequivocal profession of insuring heavenly felicity.

The truth . . . was here [in the mysteries] warranted by a venerable tradition and by the daily manifestations of the gods adored. The

belief in life beyond the grave, which had in ancient paganism been so vague and melancholy, was transformed into a confident hope in a definite beatitude. Participation in the occult ceremonies of the sect was an infallible means of finding salvation.¹⁵

In the speech of Isis to Lucius, which we have noticed on a preceding page, the goddess gives as surety for her promises to him the claim that she is "*deorum dearumque facies uniformis*," "whose name and divinity are found throughout all the world in divers manners, in variable customs and by many names." Thus all the mysteries aimed at rousing the initiate's emotions to a fanatical faith in the omnipotence of the divinity, whether of Isis or Demeter or Cybele. Means to this end were austerities and purifications, the staging of theophanies and of sacred dramas, partaking of sacred meals. The initiate emerged from his "*novitiate*" supremely confident that he had found salvation, and each year, as he took active part in the periodic rites of the cult, renewed his confidence. If only he continued devoted to the goddess, he would live blessed in this life under her guidance and find her a benign arbitress of his fate in the after life. This devotion, which subordinated to itself sacrifices and all other religious practices, reminds one of nothing so much as the "*bhakti*" of the Hindus who worship Krishna.

It should be clear that there subsists between the risen Christ and the "dying and rising gods" a relation of contrast and not of similarity. Reliable testimony establishes the Savior's death and corporal resurrection in the same class of historical facts as, let us say, the revolt of our thirteen colonies from the rule of Great Britain. The personalities and adventures of Dionysus Zagreus and his compeers are the spawn of mythologic fancy. Furthermore, it is not true that, even in the imagination of their votaries, these worthies burst the bonds of death and walked the earth triumphant. Turning from the "Paschal fact" to the "Paschal faith," we fail to see resemblance between the latter and the "faith" of the *mystae*. St. Paul's thesis that Christ is "the firstfruits of them that sleep" is demonstrated by ocular testimony of His resurrection and by the doctrine—for which this miracle furnishes the credentials—of the redemption and redintegration of human nature effected by "the last Adam." The "faith" of the *mystae*, on the other hand, embraced no so precise

¹⁵ Cumont, *op. cit.*, p. 33.

promise that their bodies "sown in corruption, would rise in incorruption," but only the amorphous hope that in some way they would find their divinity favorable to them in the darkness of Styx. Nor can their faith properly be called such, for it lacked rational foundation and was only an emotion excited by hoary fables, sustained by spectacular and dramatic rites.

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THE SCHOLARSHIP IN *Who Crucified Jesus?*

The book, *Who Crucified Jesus?* really belongs in the class of writings for which men like Klausner and Sholem Asch have become notable. As such, it hardly merited a review; and this reviewer would not have devoted time to it but for its obvious pretension to a scholarly discussion of the question. In reviewing the book (*C. B. Q.*, 5 (1943) p. 232 f.) I attempted to point out a few evidences that it fell far short of its claim. This was strictly not necessary for anyone with a passing knowledge of the New Testament. I should much prefer to rest the case with what I have already said; but since Dr. Zeitlin has sought to justify his methods (*C. B. Q.*, 6 (1944) p. 104 ff.) it is incumbent upon me to go farther into the matter. The only question now at issue is whether or not the author of the book has treated his subject in a scholarly way.

But first it should be acknowledged that we can afford to sympathize with the reactions of a Jew who reads the New Testament record of our Lord's death. If he is deeply read in rabbinical literature, and as assured of its traditions as is Dr. Zeitlin, he must expect to meet with difficulties. Further, if he investigates the subject with the intention of writing an apologia for the Jews, of justifying them by attempting to prove the Gospels guilty of libel, he must be very cautious lest his prejudices seriously influence his judgements. The author here in question is aware of this principle as it might affect the study of Jewish sources by Christians. In the introduction to his book he reminds the reader that Christian scholars in dealing with Jewish history for this period ignore or misunderstand *Tannaitic* literature. In his little book, *The Second Jewish Commonwealth*, he complains that students of the New Testament approach the history of Jewish sects subjectively, and that some of them are biased (p. xi). Again, in the brochure, *A Historical Study of the Canonization of the Jewish Scriptures*, he says of the Church Fathers: "These were outsiders and their testimony must be taken with a grain of salt" (pp. vii and 14, note).

We may, then, appreciate one cause of Dr. Zeitlin's want of scholarship in this instance. He shows himself to be an outsider in the matter of New Testament exegesis; he is writing an apologia, and his point of view is both subjective and biased. This is evident at once in the distinction he draws between the theological and historical aspects of the New Testament. What he is driving at in this distinction is to leave the impression that the honesty of the hagiographers must be questioned, since in each case they propounded a religious thesis. He expressly states this more than once in his

book. That there is an error of presumption in the attitude is too obvious to call for further remark. This is not only lack of scholarship, it is something more. He is asking the reader to follow him into the error of assuming, before the case is heard, that the Scriptures are untrustworthy and that their falsehoods are designed to perpetuate a libel against the Jews.

Under the guidance of this spirit, one that we must regard as malicious, the author is betrayed into an unscholarly handling of all the sources that come into play in this question: rabbinical literature, Josephus Flavius, the New Testament.

Rabbinical literature. He passes rather lightly over the fact that *Tannaitic* sources are both late and unreliable. They are at least a hundred years later than the Gospels, a hundred very significant years for Jewish traditions. That they are unreliable as historical documents is commonly recognized. A scholar as sympathetic as Herbert Danby can say in the introduction to his version of the Mishnah: "It is a matter of extreme difficulty to decide what historical value we should attach to any tradition recorded in the Mishnah" (*The Mishnah*, p. xiv). And again, in mentioning the variation of opinions among the Rabbis, he asserts: "... what was ideally true had a higher value in the eyes of the disputants than what once may have been actual but mistaken usage" (*id.* p. xv).

This is a fundamental defect in Dr. Zeitlin's methodology, and it has serious reverberations in his work. Thus he is strongly inclined to treat as unreliable any source that disagrees with the Mishnah. This is the basis of the difficulties he meets with in reading the Gospel narrative of Christ's death. He argues: the prescriptions of the Mishnah were apparently disregarded in the trial and execution of Christ; therefore the Gospel record of these events has been falsified. A fair scholar would feel obliged to admit that a possible explanation of the discrepancy lies in the fact that the regulations now found in the Mishnah were not in force in the time of our Lord. Or he might admit the thought that perhaps those who conducted the trial of Christ deliberately violated these laws, even if they were in existence. Not only the New Testament, but Josephus and Philo also tell us that the High Priest and his party were members of the Sanhedrin; and we know the Sadducean disrespect for such traditional laws. It is not scholarship to disregard this evidence and to adopt the position, on a later and understandable rabbinical tradition, that the Sanhedrin was made up only of Pharisees and scholars, and that it was purely a legislative body.

But this defect widens out into a worse fault in the main thesis of his book, the claim that there were two sanhedrins, the one religious, the other political. The outline of this thesis is not new, as

we have already observed. Confer, e.g., Lauterbach in the Jewish Encyclopedia *sub voce* "Sanhedrin." A possible source of the argument is obviously the distinction made by the Mishnah (*Sanhedrin* i) between a smaller and larger sanhedrin; but it must be observed that the Mishnah, in defining the competency of these groups, assigns to either a judicial function. Either could handle certain trials leading to capital punishment. The later distinction between "religious" and "political" is unwarranted Jewish tradition; the relegation of the High Priest to the political sanhedrin is an invention of immediate use to Dr. Zeitlin; the separation of biblical laws from those of the state is a consequent adornment of the theory.

The same fault is at work in his adherence to the narrow definition of blasphemy in which the Mishnah (*Sanh.* vii,5) restricts it to the actual use of the divine name. Naturally, Dr. Zeitlin rejects the earlier witness of the Gospels. In Mt. 9:3 our Lord is accused of blasphemy when He forgives sin; in Mt. 26:65 the same charge is made when He answers affirmatively the question whether He is the Christ, the Son of God; in Jn. 10:33 His making Himself equal to God is defined as blasphemy. We can understand this neglect as part of his general policy; but he should not have overlooked the support of a wider definition in the *Siphre* to Num. 15:30f; Deut. 21:22.

Josephus Flavius. Dr. Zeitlin is aware of the caution with which Josephus must be employed (cf. pp. 93 and 97 of his book). But the standard of his reservation is not that of a scholar. He will accept from Josephus whatever he can force into favoring his views; he rejects whatever opposes them. Two illustrations of this methodology are at hand.

The first of these is basic to his thesis. He strains beyond all justification certain references in Josephus to the Sanhedrin and seeks to prove from them the existence of a second, a "political" sanhedrin. A glance at these citations will manifest that they in no way modify the general teaching with reference to the Sanhedrin. For Josephus, as for Philo and the New Testament, there was but the one great Sanhedrin at Jerusalem, and it was supreme in political as well as religious affairs for the territory of Judea. It is typical of Dr. Zeitlin's method that he should omit reference to *Antiquities* 14, 9, 5. There he would find an instance in which the Sanhedrin was about to pass the death sentence on Herod I, and in which it strenuously resented the "political" influence that intervened to save him. In this case Josephus destroys Dr. Zeitlin's thesis.

The other case is his objection to the statement in Jn. 18:31 that the Jews had been deprived of the *jus gladii*. Here he "infers" from Josephus that the Romans did not interfere with the religious

customs of the Jews. That is quite correct; but it does not prove wrong the claim made in John. To seek to draw such a conclusion from Josephus without at least mentioning *Wars* 2, 8, 1 and *Antiq.* 20, 9, 1 is not fair scholarship. It is possible that he omitted these passages as uncertain; but why would he omit the two statements in the Jerusalem Talmud (*Sanh.* 1,1; 7,2) to the effect that forty years before the destruction of the Temple the right to pass death sentences was removed from the Jews?

With such loose use of historical sources we must associate several indefensible statements made by Dr. Zeitlin relative to Jewish history. (1) There is little if any evidence to show, as he claims, that in the early days of the Jewish state the king was at the head of a state court, a sanhedrin, which administered merely the laws of the state. (2) It is incorrect to say that after the Roman conquest of Judea the procurator was at the head of the "political" sanhedrin. There is, in the first place, no proof that such an institution existed. Moreover, the conquest took place in 63 B.C., the procurators first came to Judea in 6 A.D. Neither Philo nor Josephus know anything of this supposed Roman method of governing the province. (3) Washing of the hands as a sign of moral cleansing, and thus of innocence, was not peculiar to the Jews. It is mentioned by Virgil (*Aeneid* 2,719), by Sophocles (*Ajax* 654), by Herodotus (1,35). The last of these authors assures us that other peoples, in addition to the Greeks, made use of the symbolism. (4) To say that the Jews were persecuted for their monotheism, especially in Asia Minor, is untrue, at least as a general fact. Rome fully protected the Jews in the practice of their religion, and we know that a respectable number of proselytes gathered about their synagogues. (5) Finally, to insinuate that the Jews in any way favored the spread of early Christianity is merely naive. We are quite conscious of the function in this regard assigned by divine Providence to Judaism of the Diaspora; but we are equally aware of the measures taken by the Jews to prevent the growth of the Church.

The New Testament. It is, however, when we follow Dr. Zeitlin into the New Testament that we discover how grievously unmethodical is his handling of this subject. His exegesis, as mentioned before, is manifestly tendentious. It is at least that. Its purpose is to eliminate from the books of the New Testament, except the Gospel of St. John, all that might attach to the Jews responsibility for Christ's death. The impossibility of this thesis would be evident to anyone else. To accomplish his end he puts his own interpretation on many passages, and from about eight texts he eliminates certain embarrassing terms on the grounds that they are wanting in some manuscripts. Of his exegesis we need take no further notice; it is unworthy of any type

of New Testament scholarship. But his textual criticism is intriguing.

I must confess to some negligence in citing against his textual claims merely the evidence found in Nestle; but I can say in extenuation that it was not my intention to test the accuracy of his data, but to satisfy in passing my own curiosity as to the authority behind the alleged omissions. It has, however, been rewarding to correct this negligence, for the effort lends final demonstration of Dr. Zeitlin's incapacity for New Testament studies.

Two things should be noted in Von Soden (*Die Schriften des Neuen Testaments*). (1) He gives three types of apparatus in his volume on the text itself: the first lists readings that might be adopted; the second gives notable variants, but not of sufficient weight to merit further consideration; the third provides readings which he describes as of interest only for the psychology of the scribe and the history of the manuscript. (2) In connection with his second apparatus he admits that some of the variants might come from witnesses antedating the great recensions (I, H, K).

It is perhaps from the second of these points that Dr. Zeitlin draws the principle: "Some readings reach back to an early period before the Gospels were actually put into writing" (p. 102). If this could be demonstrated at all, it certainly is not true of any of the variants he here has occasion to cite. It hardly, however, seems possible that the author would confuse the term "recension" with the first writing of the Gospels. But if he does not, his principle may be regarded as illuminating.

But that he is guilty of misquoting is clear from an examination of the apparatus in Von Soden for the eight texts in question.

Mt. 23:34—no variants are given in the second apparatus; the third offers one isolated witness for the omission of six words.

Mt. 26:4—no variants in the second apparatus; the third cites two witnesses for the omission of 'and kill him.'

Mt. 26:49—in both the second and the third apparatus there is question not of an omission but of the spelling of the term "rabbi."

Mt. 27:1—no variants occur in the second apparatus; in the third one manuscripts read *ἵνα θανατώσουσιν* for *ὥστε θανατώσαι*.

Mark 7:6—no variants in the second apparatus; in the third Syr. sin. (cur.) is quoted as omitting "hypocrite."

Mark 10:33—no variants in the second apparatus; in the third the term "death" is wanting from one witness.

Mark 14:45—here again there is question merely of the spelling of "rabbi," or its occurrence once or twice; but no witness is cited for its omission.

Luke 13:15—in the second apparatus some witnesses take “hypocrite” in the singular (following Luke 6:42 or Mt. 7:5); one witness is given in the third apparatus as omitting the term.

Hence in four of the eight cases there is no question of an omission; in the others the evidence is negligible, and is marked as such by Von Soden. Further, no other authority, whether in critical editions of the New Testament, or in scientific commentaries on the Gospels, so much as even mentions the variants. This proves at least carelessness on the part of Dr. Zeitlin.

Against St. John's Gospel he raises special charges, being inclined to blame the Beloved Disciple for the whole matter. We need not quarrel with his dating of the Gospel in the first quarter of the second century, though it was certainly somewhat earlier. But we may object to his accuracy in terming Loisy a foremost authority on the Gospels, and a Catholic. He was in fact neither. We may further insist that the term *Ἰουδαίου* is used *almost* exclusively of the leaders of Judaism. In reply to this contention Dr. Zeitlin cites a few instances in which the term is used as an adjective or an attribute, cases that do not enter into the question. That John represents the Jews as objecting to our Lord's violation of the *halakoth* is clear from 5:16-18; 7:19; 9:16; these are a sufficient answer to Dr. Zeitlin's sweeping negation.

In concluding it can be admitted that nowhere do the Apostolic Fathers deal formally with this question of responsibility for the execution of our Lord. But to cite this as evidence that they knew nothing of the part played in it by the Jews is to show a fine lack of appreciation of their writings and in particular of such passages as Ignatius to the Trallians (ix), Polycarp to the Philippians (1), and the Epistle of Barnabas (V, 7). There is another inference that should be drawn from this apparent silence: how eloquently it describes the disposition of the early Church to overlook the share of the Jews in the crucifixion of Jesus!

Dr. Zeitlin was exercised, and perhaps with reason, over a public claim that he lacked scholarship in dealing with this question; but he should sympathize with our disturbance over his accusing the hagiographers of deliberate falsehood. To make such accusations, and with the little justification we have seen, is to perpetuate the myth that the Jews are persecuted for putting Christ to death, to raise an issue that might well divide Christians and Jews, to seek the elimination of Christian charity, and to prejudice faith in Him who alone can assure us peace.

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BIBLICAL NEWS

His Excellency, Most Reverend Francis J. L. Beckman, Archbishop of Dubuque, in a pastoral letter read in all the parishes of the archdiocese on Biblical Sunday, February 6, 1944, promulgated Septuagesima Sunday as Biblical Sunday in the archdiocese "henceforth and forever, that both clergy and laity be urged to taste and see how sweet is the Lord Who has given us the bread of the Word of God." Among other specific recommendations is the following: "We recommend priests to join the *Catholic Biblical Association of America*, *Catholic University of America*, by subscribing to THE CATHOLIC BIBLICAL QUARTERLY."

His Excellency, Most Reverend James A. Griffin, Bishop of Springfield in Illinois, who annually maps out a course of sermons to be given in all the churches of his jurisdiction during the year, has this year prescribed that a course of instructions be given on the general theme of the Old Testament.

The Catholic Biblical Association of America is happy to welcome the establishment of a new Biblical Society in Canada. The Hierarchy of Québec at their tri-monthly meeting in November, 1943, approved and named an episcopal committee to direct the project. The members of this committee are their Excellencies, the Most Reverend Joseph Charbonneau, Archbishop of Montréal, Most Reverend Alfred Langlois, Bishop of Valleyfield, and Most Reverend Anastase Forget, Bishop of Saint-Jean-de-Québec. The President of the new Association is the Reverend Adrien Malo, O.F.M. The first meeting was held at the Grand Séminaire of Montréal on January 30, 1944, at which the rules and constitution of the new Society were adopted and various undertakings discussed. Chief among these is the preparation of a new French translation of the four Gospels, to be followed by the translation of other biblical texts. The official name of the Society is *L'Association Catholique d'Études Bibliques au Canada* (ACEBAC).

Msgr. Dr. Juan Straubinger of Argentina, South America, continues his excellent work of revising Dr. Torres Amat's Castilian version of the Old Testament. The Psalms have just been published in both the Castilian and the Latin text with excellent and copious footnotes.

According to a recent directive of the Episcopal Committee of the Confraternity of Christian Doctrine, the basic text for the revision of the English Old Testament is to be the Hebrew and Greek text, according to the original language of the book's composition. This

decision was made in view of the recent pronouncement of the Pontifical Biblical Commission relative to the use and authority of vernacular versions of the Sacred Scriptures. This decree was issued August 22, 1943, and is published in *Acta Apostolicae Sedis*, XXXV, pp. 270-271.

Right Reverend Msgr. John Romaniello, Superior of the Maryknoll Mission at Kweilin, China, has announced that the noted Chinese scholar, a convert to Catholicism, Dr. John C. Wu, is preparing a new translation of the Holy Scriptures into more attractive and popular Chinese. This project was undertaken at the express request of Generalissimo Chiang Kai-shek.

The "experimental" version of the New Testament made by Monsignor Ronald Knox is in press and will be delivered to subscribers soon. The book is not for general sale; it will be delivered only to subscribers of whom there are about 7000.

Back Numbers of the Review Wanted

In order to supply the demand for back numbers of the Quarterly, the Association is anxious to secure the following back numbers:

April 1939,	Vol. 1, No. 2.
July 1939,	Vol. 1, No. 3.
April 1940,	Vol. 2, No. 2.
October 1941,	Vol. 3, No. 4.

\$1.00 will be paid for each copy of the above issues of the Quarterly. Send them to

CATHOLIC BIBLICAL ASSOCIATION
CATHOLIC UNIVERSITY
WASHINGTON 17, D. C.

Biblical Sunday and Week were observed with great solemnity at St. Mary's College, Xavier, Kansas, beginning with a solemn Pontifical Mass, celebrated by the Most Reverend Paul Schulte, Bishop of Leavenworth. The sermon was delivered by the Rev. Christopher Rehwinkle, O.F.M. of Teutopolis, Ill. There was a series of lectures during the week and informal talks in the library in explanation of the various biblical exhibits which included items lent by the Capuchin Fathers of Marathon, Wis. and the Franciscan Fathers of St. Bonaventure's College, N. Y. Honoring the occasion by an address was the Most Reverend Edwin O'Hara, Bishop of Kansas City, indefatigable promoter of biblical studies. In addition to Father Rehwinkle, other active members of the Association who gave addresses were the Reverends Henry Willmering, S.J., Kevin Smythe, O.M.Cap., Patrick Cum-

mins, O.S.B. The Honorable John Craig of Tulsa, Okla., exhibited and explained the features of the de luxe edition of the Confraternity New Testament.

Biblical Sunday was commemorated at the Catholic University of America with a solemn Mass in the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception. An eloquent sermon was delivered by the Very Rev. Ignatius Smith, O.P.

There continues to be a steady sale of the Commentary on the New Testament. During the period, July to December 1943, about 1200 copies were sold, bringing the total distribution to date to about 19,000 copies.

A general meeting of the Association is planned for the latter part of August at St. Mary's College, Notre Dame, Indiana.

SURVEY OF PERIODICALS

NEW TESTAMENT

REV. JOHN J. COLLINS, S.J., S.S.L.

REV. ANTHONY COTTER, S.J., S.T.D.

Anglican Theological Review, 25, 1943. S. I. Feigin, "The Date of the Last Supper" (212-7). Originally "the Synoptic Gospels were not out of harmony with John concerning the Last Supper. All hinges on a mistranslation or an obliteration of a single letter" in the Hebrew or Aramaic. The Last Supper was an ordinary meal and not the Passover.

R. M. Grant, "Papias and the Gospels" (218-22). "Papias probably knew our four gospels as well as at least one more. This does not prove that he knew them as Scripture, however, but simply that he read them and valued them highly."

A. D. Nock, "Greek in Jewish Palestine" (223-7). Reviews S. Lieberman's book with that title.

S. E. Johnson, "Marcion and the New Testament" (228-33). Reviews J. Knox's book of that title. He thinks some points "should be considered before one accepts a view of Luke-Acts so similar to that of the Tübingen school."

C. C. McCown, "Aramaic and Greek Gospels" (281-94). Points out agreements between the two opposing schools and indicates the consequences for N. T. scholars.

P. S. Minear, "The Jerusalem Fund and Pauline Chronology" (389-96). His study corroborates "the chronologies of Professor Riddle and Knox at several important points: the early date of the prison letters; the close association of Galatians and II Corinthians 10-13; the late date of the Jerusalem conference after the first imprisonment in Ephesus; the importance of this council in determining Paul's subsequent activity."

P. Parker, "Paul Kept the Faith" (398-402). "Paul did not distort the gospel. On polity and ceremonial, he and the others diverged widely, violently. But in their common thought of the Christ there was no schism."

Bibliotheca Sacra, 100, 1943. J. F. Walvoord, "Is Satan Bound?" (497-512). The interpretation of Apocalypse 20:1-3. "The binding of Satan and his period of total activity are still future and will constitute a major feature of the future millennium on earth."

J. H. Bennetch, "Exegetical Studies in 1 Peter" (524-31). Treats 3:13ff. on the suffering of the just man.

C. F. Lincoln, "The Biblical Covenants" (565-73). II. Concluded from July-Sept. Number. Discusses the major biblical covenants.

Clergy Review, 23 (1943). J. M. T. Barton, "Notes on Recent Work. Holy Scripture" (417-20). Reviews Dorothy Sayers' series of radio plays, *The Man Born to be King*, Duff Cooper's *David*, and Arthur Stanley's *The Bedside Bible*.

J. J. Murphy, C.Ss.R., "The Gospels and Divorce: a Theological Approach" (441-9). Suggests that our Lord did not intend "to abrogate there and then the Mosaic permission but... to give such an authoritative declaration of the divine law as would leave no doubt about the indissolubility of marriage in the minds of His followers when His death should have abolished the whole Mosaic law, including the permission of divorce, and the original law of marriage should have come back into force once more."

E. F. Sutcliffe, S.J., "Our Lady's Sister" (494-8). Disputes claim of A.G.M. in *Clergy Review*, August 1943, that Salome was the sister of our Lady. There "does not appear to be any sound reason for identifying Salome with the sister of our Lady mentioned by St. John, and no ancient writer made this identification. . . . According to the very early testimony of Hegesippus, Cleophas was brother to St. Joseph, and his wife, Mary, was therefore sister-in-law to our Lady."

Commissio Pontificia de Re Biblica. "Responsum de Versionibus Sacrae Scripturae in Linguas Vernaculas" with comment by J. M. T. B. (524-5). The Ordinaries may recommend translations made from the original texts if approved "a viris biblica et theologica scientia excellentibus." The selections read to the faithful during Mass are to be from a translation of the Vulgate, but the preacher may clarify the text by the aid of the original or a clearer text.

Expository Times, 54, 1943. D. Daube, "A Rhetorical Principle in the Gospels" (305-6). This is the principle of Aristotle: "you may employ interrogation of your opponent when one point is self-evident, and it is clear that the person interrogated will have to grant you the other as soon as you put the question. Yet, when you have obtained your first premiss by asking your opponent to admit it, you must not proceed to put what is self-evident in the form of a question, but simply state the conclusion yourself." This may be a key to a Hellenistic background of a narrative in Lk. 6:6ff. and 7:36ff.

J. R. Coates, "Cults of To-day. V. British Israel" (313-5). Refutes the thesis of British Israel "that the British and the Americans, with some other kindred peoples, are physically descended from the Ten Tribes of Northern Israel."

C. K. Barrett, "Q: A Re-examination" (320-3). Probably behind Q were "a greater number of sources than have commonly been allowed for."

F. J. Babcock, "Baptism for the Dead" (330). Suggests the whole difficulty comes from the misplacing of the stops. Read: what are the baptized to do? If the resurrection of the dead is completely ruled out, they are merely baptized into death; and whatever is the use of that?

P. J. Heawood, "The Passover" (330-1). "I have brought forward some evidence to show that Luke's way of starting a new day [with sunrise] is not altogether a mistake."

J. Foster, "Denying Oneself" (331). Three Gospel passages show that "to affirm love for the Lord is the equivalent of denying oneself."

Expository Times, 55, 1943. W. H. Murray Walton, "The Over-Ruling Purpose of God as shown in Paul's Missionary Travels" (33-6). The apparent thwartings and postponements of Paul's plans are an indication of God's Providence guiding his work.

N. Mannicol, "India in the New Testament" (50-2). I Cor. 13, giving my body to be burned, would refer to the Indian who had himself burned to death at Athens 20 B.C. James 3:6, the tongue a fire and the wheel of nature, suggest a reference to the Indian doctrine of the fire which destroys the world, and the wheel of nativity suggests the successive transmigrations of the soul.

C. Stewart Petrie, "The Proto-Luke Hypothesis: Observations on Dr. Vincent Taylor's Rejoinder" (52-3). Takes up the matter point by point. Still disagrees with Taylor.

A. E. Garvie, "The Spirit as the Word" (53-4). Comments upon Canon England's, "The Revelation of the Word."

J. Ramsay Thomson, "Baptism for the Dead" (54). "The dead died prematurely, leaving their work or tasks uncompleted. . . . Baptism for the dead means being baptized unto their work to accomplish what they had left undone . . . lest they, returning, chide."

S. T. Byington, "Hebrews X, 1" (54). A suggested emendation of Hort is confirmed by the Beatty papyrus 46.

Harvard Theological Review, 36, 1943. M. S. Enslin, "Luke and the Samaritans" (277-97). Claims that Luke introduces three Samaritan incidents, mostly of his own invention, to show that the Gentile mission was part of the divine plan from the earliest days.

Historia Judaica 5, 1943. H. Hailperin, "The Hebrew Heritage of Mediaeval Christian Biblical Scholarship" (133-54). Shows how the mediaeval Christian writers, particularly Nicholas of Lyra, made use of rabbinic commentaries.

Homiletic and Pastoral Review, 1943. J. J. Collins, S.J., "Providentissimus Deus" (112-7). A brief summary and comment of Pope Leo's encyclical.

Irish Ecclesiastical Record, 62, 1943. "Study of Scripture. Pont. Bibl. Comm. Letter Nov. 20, 1941 to Hierarchy of Italy" (352-6). The Italian text.

Journal of Bible and Religion, 11, 1943. E. F. Scott, "The Conception of God's Law in the Prophets and in Jesus" (152-5). "It was the limitation of the prophets that they never escaped from the idea of the moral law as statutory." Jesus "sought to create in men a new kind of life, in which they would serve God because they shared in his moral nature."

P. S. Minear, "The Conception of History in the Prophets and Jesus" (156-61). "There are differences in the content of his ideas and thought-patterns." His mission "was a true fulfillment of the prophets, bringing him to their succession but . . . inaugurating a new covenant."

C. P. Coffin, "An Old Testament Prophecy and Some New Testament Miracle Stories" (162-6). Probably Isa. 35:3-6 could by wishful thinking be the source of a family of marvel stories such as the evangelists have collected and transcribed.

E. J. Goodspeed, "Paul and Slavery" (169-70). In *Whither Mankind* W. H. Van Loon states "To this very hour not a single theologian has been able to prove that Paul and his followers regarded the serf as anything but a two-footed piece of cattle." Goodspeed shows that "The simple fact is, the statement in *Whither Mankind* is totally wrong."

Journal of Biblical Literature, 62, 1943. C. T. Craig, "Biblical Theology and the Rise of Historicism" (281-94). Shows the historical development of this branch of learning. The writer thinks that the "older historicism had run into bankruptcy. . . . But the present revolt is in grave danger of becoming a retreat to dogma."

F. W. Beare, "The Sequence of Events in Acts 9:15 and the Career of Peter" (295-306). Rearranges much of the material and considers that the Council of Jerusalem was in the winter of 42-43 or 43-44.

A. N. Wilder, "Variant Traditions of the Resurrection in Acts" (307-18). In the speeches and narratives of Acts there may be discerned primitive elements which did not clearly distinguish between the resurrection, ascension, the conferring of the Spirit and the parousia.

T. E. Floyd Honey, "Did Mark Use Q?" (319-31). The writer thinks that Mark used a Roman collection of the sayings of Jesus, akin to Q but not identical with it.

Journal of Religion, 23, 1943. W. R. Taylor, "Biblical Criticism and Modern Faith" (229-39). We "can say that recent research has brought into high relief (a) the Bible's unique significance in the cul-

tural process, (b) the qualitative superiority of the biblical literature comparatively, and (c) the Bible as a body of sincere and vital documents."

D. W. Riddle, "The Jewishness of Paul" (240-1). A critical review of Klausner's *Miyyeschu ad Paulus*. "Perhaps the best statement is that Paul was a zealous Jew who as a result of individual experience made a number of judgments which were so individual that not only they but Paul himself became quite unacceptable to his Jewish contemporaries."

Journal of Theological Studies. 44, 1943. H. F. D. Sparks, "The Semitisms of St. Luke's Gospel" (129-38). The "bulk of his semitisms are to be ascribed to his reverence for, and imitation of the LXX. They are, in fact, not 'Semitisms' at all, but 'Septuagintalisms.'" Arguing from the semitisms the author concludes "that St. Luke had no other sources besides St. Mark and Q."

C. Lattey, "Lambanein in 2 Cor. xi. 20" (148). Suggests the translation, "if anyone lay hands upon you."

D. Daube, "Two Haggadic Principles and the Gospels" (149-55). The first principle is "There is no before and after in Scripture," which conceivably may have influenced the evangelists so that "they disregarded dates, arranged incidents as they deemed best, combined several narratives or divided one." The second principle is "the general tendency of Haggadah to elaborate what it finds."

C. C. Tarelli, "Erasmus's Manuscripts of the Gospels" (155-62). The accusation that he used mainly a single manuscript of the fifteenth century is untrue. This Ms 2 can hardly be later than the 12th century. The author also consider the other MSS Erasmus had or could have had.

S. L. Greenslade, "Scripture and Other Doctrinal Norms in Early Theories of the Ministry" (162-76). Contends that Clement, Ignatius, Tertullian, and Cyprian do not prove that the hierarchy is derived from our Lord.

Revue l'Université d' Ottawa, 13, 1943. D. Poulet, "Providentissimus Deus" (304-29). A Continuation of the article in the April number.

C. Morin, P.S.S. "Sagesse et Charité. Nôtre Configuration au Christ-Sagesse" (466-78). A scriptural theological treatment of the subject.

Theological Studies, 4, 1943. J. T. Curran, S.J. "The Teaching of II Peter 1:20 on the Interpretation of Prophecy" (347-68). "The expression *idias epiluseos*... suggested to its first readers a warning that their own interpretation of the prophetic Scriptures was not to be

preferred to the inspired interpretations of the great apostolic leaders or the official interpretations given by their local *didaskaloi*."

L. J. McGinley, S.J., "Hellenic Analogies and the Typical Healing Narrative" (385-419). "The synoptic narratives so differ from the analogies adduced, that their very form indicates a different origin and development."

J. Hennig, "Our Daily Bread" (445-54). "Professor Preisigke's translation of *epiousion* by 'sufficient for one day's ration' is exhaustive." "According to the full significance of the fourth petition of our Lord's prayer we leave it to God to fix our next meal-time. We leave it to Him to decide what quantity of good we want for our sustenance to that next meal."

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BOOK REVIEWS

IGINO GIORDANI, *The Social Message of Jesus*. Translated from the Italian by Alba I. Zizzamia (Paterson: St. Anthony Guild Press, 1943). Pp. 406. \$4.00.

Is there a Catholic system of social thought? Definitely, replies the author of *The Social Message of Jesus*, although our Lord gave no answer to the specific political and social problems of his own or our own day; had he done so, he would now be ranged with other reformers like Abraham Lincoln, for example; and however useful his teaching may have been, it would have little if any value in the changed circumstances of our times. The reform worked by Christ was carried out in the depths of men's hearts. He deliberately limited his teachings to the moral and religious life of men, and this, far from being an unreal or escapist approach to social problems, is actually the only way in which human society will be bettered. For the moral and religious life of every man is inextricably bound up with his civic and economic life. History shows that Christ's teachings fashioned the soul of a new society wherein the radical modification of the spirit led to the radical modification of the conduct of man towards his brothers in Christ.

Christianity (meaning Catholicism) does not solve but simplifies concrete social problems by defining their limits as *means*, not ends, of human activity. They are not to absorb all man's attention. God, not man, is the head of the new order, the kingdom of God, and this arrangement sets up a hierarchy of values wherein spiritual things take precedence over what is material. But to seek *first* the kingdom of God does not mean that one must seek that only; after *that*, one must

diligently seek the rest (Christ condemned the lazy servant), but tranquilly, serenely confident that our all powerful Father watches over us, and that our material problems have each their place and value in the plan of divine Providence.

It is the Church, the society instituted by Christ, in which He lives, that proposes His message with unflagging energy to each generation. Unswervingly it indicates to society what should be its activity, its directions, and limits; fearlessly it denies to the State and the world that absolutism which would, if given free reign, enslave man. The absolute principles of justice and charity, which oblige every man to put aside selfish considerations and, as far as possible, to place all men on the same plane of moral and material well-being to which he may have attained, led to the transformation of humanity into a family which is bound together by ties of blood, the blood of Christ. The importance of practicing charity and justice is evidenced from the fact that Christ makes such practice the indispensable condition of entry into the eternal kingdom of God.

Thus briefly exposed is the theme developed in twelve brilliant chapters. To mention a few: Historical Background, The Human Family, the Subject of Social Thought (man), Justice, Love, The Economic Problem, and Labor. It is a lengthy book, with an excellent selected bibliography and index. The translation is admirably done, and only occasionally does the flow of the rhetoric obtrude itself upon the reader's attention. Theologically, *The Social Message of Jesus* is sound, for the ultimate ordering of man to God is never forgotten. Exegetically, this book, besides being highly reverent and intelligent, arouses the reader to a realization of the immense practicability and applicability of the Faith. Chapter by chapter the author reveals a truly amazing familiarity and insight into the Scriptures, so much so, in fact, that he brings to mind the scribe (Mt. 13:52) who like the householder brings forth from his storeroom things old and new. The author has eaten well of the bread of the Scriptures. The present volume is the precursor of two others still to appear; few series have had more auspicious beginnings.

RICHARD T. MURPHY, O.P.

JOHN E. STEINMUELLER, *A Companion to Scripture Studies*. Volume III. Special Introduction to the New Testament. (New York: Wagner, 1943). Pp. 394. \$3.75.

This is the third and final volume of Father Steinmueller's *Companion to Scripture Studies*. It deals with the historical, didactic, and prophetic books of the New Testament, the books of each group being considered separately in their probable chronological order. There are, besides, chapters on the Synoptic Problem, and the life of Christ, the latter comprising remarks on the parables, miracles, and chronology of the life of Christ.

Catholic teaching on these subjects has fairly well crystallized and the author presents it in English dress with a wealth of bibliographical data. Perhaps his choice in some of the questions about which scholars are not in full agreement may indicate the tenor of his work. The Gospel of St. Matthew most probably was written between 42 and 50 (p. 64); it is quite certain that Mark made use of the Aramaic Mt. (p. 128); John the Presbyter is not distinct from John the Evangelist (p. 136); though the genuinity of Jn. 7:53-8:11 is problematical, it is easier to explain its omission or suppression than its insertion (p. 156); at the beginning of our Lord's public ministry His teaching was simple and plain, but in the second year of His public life, when opposition arose, He adopted the parabolic method (p. 188); Christ was probably born in 8 B.C. (p. 199) and died probably on the fourteenth of Nisan (April 3) of the year 33, after a ministry of three years (pp. 202-207); the North Galatian theory seems more probable (p. 261); the opinion denying both journey and letter to Corinth between 1 Cor. and 2 Cor. is more probable (p. 273); the Epistle to the Ephesians was very probably a circular letter (p. 317); the Epistle of St. James probably dates between 58 and 62 (p. 360); the Johanne Comma does not seem to be genuine (p. 378). All may not agree with the above conclusions. However the author presents the evidence for the divergent opinions, and indicates the motives which determined his own choice.

There are nevertheless a few statements to which we take exception. They may appear relatively unimportant, but to some extent they involve the interpretation of papal documents and so are not to be passed over lightly. We have noted that the author is of the opinion that Christ died in the year 33. But is it correct to write (p. 205): "This was also the year which His Holiness, Pope Pius XI, in his Encyclical on the Holy Year urged as the most probable"? In the second paragraph of this document (cf. *AAS*, XXV, 1933, 5 ff.) we read: "Indeed, although the precise year of this event [i.e., the Redemption of Mankind] has not been historically ascertained, nevertheless the fact in itself, or rather the series of these admirable works, is of such gravity and importance that it would be improper to let them pass in silence." (Cf. *Eccl. Rev.*, 1933, 302.) Those words hardly warrant any further conclusion than that the Pope is abstracting from the exact year.

There are, also, some statements as regards opinions of Père Lagrange with which we cannot agree. In the chapter on the Synoptic Problem we find numbered among the advocates of the author's Hypothesis of Mutual Dependence, "Lagrange (1921, 1923)," the dates referring presumably to his commentaries on Lk. and Mt. Then in the exposé of the hypothesis we read among other things: "Accord-

ing to the advocates of this theory, St. Mark followed the Aramaic Gospel of St. Matthew" (p. 119). But Lagrange denies this. (Cf. *Ev. selon s. Matth.* p. xli.) More important is this. The author's conception of the Hypothesis of Mutual Dependence seems to exclude the concomitant influence of oral tradition and extracanonical written documents. But Lagrange postulates both these latter elements. (Cf. *Ibid.* p. xli f.) It seems quite obvious, then, that Lagrange is not an advocate of the Hypothesis of Mutual Dependence as the author conceives it. We say "as the author conceives it," because other authors, for instance Vosté (cf., *De Synopt.*, p. 45), understand this hypothesis as including the concomitant influence of oral tradition and of pre-existing extracanonical written documents.

Under the heading of the Hypothesis of Written Documents, two forms of the so-called Two Document Theory are presented. Of the second form (Canonical Mk. and the Logia of Matthew) we read (p. 123): "The canonical Gospel of St. Mark is substituted for Proto-Mark, but the Logia of Matthew (Q) remains practically the same (i.e., the Hebrew or Aramaic Gospel of St. Matthew, which is supposed to have contained the collection of the sayings of the Lord and to have been substantially different from our canonical Greek Gospel of St. Matthew). These two sources are considered as the principal materials used for the compilation of the canonical Gospels of St. Matthew and St. Luke. This theory, which was first proposed by Chr. H. Weisse (1858), was followed by . . . , and to a certain extent by the following Catholic writers: . . . M. J. Lagrange ([?] 1904, 1911), . . ."

Two previous texts must be added here. On page 51 we read: "What is the interpretation of τὰ λόγια in the text of Papias? Since the time of F. Schleiermacher (1832) most non-Catholics and a few Catholics maintain that the phrase signifies merely a collection of discourses of Our Lord to the exclusion of the facts or actions recorded in the First Gospel." After the word "Catholics" we have a reference to a footnote, which reads: "Before the decisions of the Pontifical Biblical Commission of June 19, 1911, and June 26, 1912, declaring the substantial identity of the Greek Gospel of Matthew with its primitive original, may be cited . . . M. J. Lagrange ([?]1904, 1911) etc." Again on page 58, this time under the heading of "Adversaries" of the tradition that the primitive text of the Gospel of St. Matthew was in a Semitic language, we find these words: "Most modern non-Catholics . . . and a few Catholics (e.g., P. Batiffol, M. J. Lagrange) assert that the original language of the First Gospel was Greek. At the most, some of the critics will concede that the Logia (which are mentioned by Papias and assumed to be merely the discourses of Jesus) were written by Matthew in the Semitic language." After the name, "Lagrange," is another reference to a footnote reading: "Both in-

clined to this view before the decision of the Pontifical Biblical Commission on June 19, 1911."

It is to be noted that the author is in some doubt about attributing to Lagrange the opinions in question—in the first two instances we have a question mark, in the last he speaks of an inclination. Now no one can clear up that doubt better than Lagrange himself, and it happens that he has done so in very explicit terms.

Shortly after the publication in 1911 of his commentary on Mk. (and that presumably is what the author has in mind by the date (1911), a reviewer took Lagrange to task for misconceptions similar to the preceding. We have Lagrange's own reply. (Cf. *R.B.*, 1912, 633-636.) He denied that his book, which was published before the decisions of the Biblical Commission, contained anything contrary to these decisions, and, among other things, referred his critic back to these words of his, written in 1896, and never retracted: "If the Logia are an evangelical work containing the life, discourses, Passion and Resurrection of the Savior, a work written in Aramaic or in Hebrew by the Apostle Matthew, I do not refuse to give it, as Papias, the name of evangelical Logia. I have conceded, it is true, that in the Greek translation it could have undergone a certain transformation, which would have given the new work the character, as it were, of an original writing; but I do not believe internal criticism proves that these changes touch *the substance*, and hence it is not in contradiction with the traditional opinion which considers the First Gospel as at once an inspired work, which is not the case with a simple version, and the work of the Apostle St. Matthew." (Cf. *R.B.*, pp. 27 ff.)

It would be difficult to be more explicit. But in case any confusion remains, let us note the following. Lagrange's critic wrote: "Either the Greek gospel of Matthew is identical with the original Aramaic or it is different." (Cf. *R.B.*, 1912, 634). Lagrange replied: "When it [the Biblical Commission] says that the Greek Gospel is identical with the Semitic original *quoad substantiam*, it is impossible to think that it has used this word lightly. When one affirms identity as regards substance, one reserves the possibility of divergences as regards accidentals" (*Ibid.*, p. 635). Further on he notes that the Biblical Commission has condemned "a very definite hypothesis of independent criticism, which makes the Greek Matthew and Luke depend '*ab evangelio Marci et a collectione sic dicta sermonum Domini*,' that is to say, from a source which would have contained only discourses. It is not so that I conceive the original Semitic of St. Matthew, as I have never failed to say in my works, articles, and reviews" (*Ibid.*, p. 636).

Neither before nor after 1911, then, can there be any question of even an inclination on the part of Lagrange to hold (1) either that the Greek Matthew was substantially different from the Aramaic

original, or (2) that the Logia of Matthew consisted merely in a collection of discourses. Accordingly there is no just reason for perpetuating these attributions, even in a doubtful manner, and we trust that in future editions they will be deleted.

Apart from the foregoing and some other confusing statements, we find this book satisfactory. In fact we consider it the most satisfactory volume of the series.

WILLIAM M. O'BEIRNE, O.P.

JOSEPH KLAUSNER, PH.D., *From Jesus to Paul*. Translated from the Hebrew by William F. Stinespring, Ph.D. (New York: The Macmillan Co., 1943). \$3.50.

Errors so abound in this volume that their mere enumeration would be extremely boring. In fact the whole book is an error, since it seeks to prove the impossible! What would we say of the treatise of a savant who would try to convince us that the sun is illumined by the moon? Mr. Klausner attempts something of this sort when he seeks to persuade us that the founder of Christianity was not Jesus Christ but Saul of Tarsus. The demonstration, it goes without saying, is as clear as mud!

Mr. Klausner starts from the principle, duly established, he thinks, in his preceding work, *Jesus of Nazareth*, that Jesus Christ had neither the thought nor the desire of being anything else than a Jew. He was—it is Mr. Klausner who makes this revelation to the world—neither God, nor Messiah, nor Redeemer, nor Priest, nor King. He was not even just and infallible, for He had defects and was miserably mistaken about His mission. He never arose from the dead; His resurrection existed only in the hysterical imagination of Mary Magdalene and in the visions and hallucinations of the two enthusiastic apostles. He did not ascend into heaven, nor did He ever have the intention of founding anything before His death, least of all a universal and perpetually enduring Church. Briefly, according to Mr. Klausner, Jesus Christ, like all the false messiahs of his time, would have been forever forgotten if He had not had the good fortune of being glorified by Saul of Tarsus.

What of Saul of Tarsus? Clearly Mr. Klausner has no love for him! Saul's original sin was that he was not a Jew of Palestine; he was a Jew of the Diaspora. He came from that pagan Greek world which had obviously filled him with its religious and philosophical ideas. Mr. Klausner devotes two hundred pages of his book to the examination and synthesis of all the religious tendencies of the period in order to show us how Christianity, especially Paul's Christianity, was the culmination of them all. There is no end to the corrections to be made in this synthesis, which the author elaborates, and especially in the conclusions which he allows himself to draw. The reader is always aware

of the author's need of establishing the preliminaries of a thesis which he will try to defend in the second part of his work.

What about the conversion of Saul of Tarsus? Merely a sharp attack of epilepsy! Yes, according to Mr. Klausner, Saul was an epileptic, a visionary, a victim of hallucination. In the formidable crisis which he experienced on the road to Damascus, Saul believed that he had seen Jesus in glory seated at the right hand of the Father. This creative vision made such an impression on Saul that it radically changed his attitude towards the Crucified and determined his vocation. Henceforth Saul of Tarsus will be an apostle of Jesus Christ, but an apostle, be it carefully noted, not of the real Christ, but of the Christ *imagined as glorified*, of the Christ *deified by Saul*, and made the equal of the Father!

And this glorified Christ will convince the new convert that obviously there must be a new religion, a religion of mysteries, a religion purely spiritual, disengaged, consequently, from the precepts of the Mosaic Law and, above all, from the yoke of circumcision, which was so repulsive to the Gentiles. Henceforth, it will not be necessary to become a Jew in order to be saved.

Paul undertakes to preach this so-called Christian doctrine. He encounters, of course, a formidable opposition, not only on the part of the Palestinian Jews but also on the part of the Jews of the Diaspora. This is easily understandable. But it is not only from the Jews of the Synagogue that the opposition comes. It arises strong and violent from the Christian churches of Jews founded by the twelve apostles and particularly from those established by Peter and James. Mr. Klausner sketches for us the picture of this pretended struggle between two classes of disciples. The incidents of Antioch and at the Council of Jerusalem are grossly exaggerated for the sake of the thesis. Each is literally made a *casus belli*. Peter and Paul separate but each maintains his position. Peter continues always to be the apostle of the circumcised, Paul the apostle of the uncircumcised. They avoid each other all through their lives; they fight against each other; they condemn each other. Finally, on the day of their death, they speak again to each other and a reconciliation is effected!

But Paul definitely carries the day, not only over the Jews but also over the followers of Peter and James. Genius of adaptation, practical by temperament, realist as were few men before him, Paul understands the deep tendencies of the pagan world, the religious ideas which animate it, and the mystic needs of which it is the victim. Paul masters this pagan world by offering it exactly the doctrine and the religion it demands. The people throng into the church of Paul under the false impression that it is the true Church of Christ. Paul the more readily succeeds in his work of evangelization because the Jews,

his most vigorous opponents, lose their influence in the Graeco-Roman world as they pave the way by internal dissension and strife for the destruction of their city and nation.

But, it will be asked, how can Mr. Klausner get from the scriptural documents his theory of Saul of Tarsus founder of the Christian religion? How can he conceive the origin of Christianity in such a strange manner?

What about the scriptural documents? Mr. Klausner divests them of all historical value. The Acts of the Apostles is the first book to be sacrificed. It was written, according to Mr. Klausner, at the end of the first century, that is, thirty or forty years after the events it narrates. Besides, it can readily be discovered, argues Mr. Klausner, that there are evident traces of a more or less unhappy combination of different and conflicting sources. The author is more a theologian than a historian. He manipulates in his own way facts and words to such an extent that the Acts cannot be used as reliable historical document.

What about the Epistles of St. Paul? Do they merit any more credence? Mr. Klausner rejects the authenticity of the three Pastoral Epistles, since, modern criticism contends, they reflect historic conditions posterior to those in which Paul lived. They cannot, therefore, have come from his pen. As to the other Epistles, Mr. Klausner recognizes their Pauline origin; they truly reflect the soul and the doctrine of the apostle. But it should not be forgotten that this doctrine rests not on the solid foundation of a real Christ, historic, suffering, condemned, but on the imaginary vision of a Christ transformed, transfigured, glorified, divinized, saviour of the world. This amounts to saying that Paul cannot in his Epistles reveal to us what the genuine Christ was, but only what Paul thought and believed about him. Thus we see that in this strange interpretation there remains no historic value in the Pauline writings. Accordingly, Mr. Klausner takes up, page after page, all the narratives contained in the scriptural documents only to correct them, squeeze them into the framework of his thesis, force them to prove just the exact opposite of what they say. It is hard to imagine a more complete distortion of the New Testament writings.

We can gather from the foregoing the value of the technical apparatus with which Mr. Klausner seeks to cover his demonstration. He may perhaps succeed in dazzling some few simple folk, but even this much is not certain. All of the most bizarre opinions that have ever been printed for the past one hundred years about Christ and the New Testament, all of the most weird affirmations that the crudest German rationalism has been pleased to originate and spread broadcast in biblical literature, opinions that no serious scholar would wish to reproduce in any of his works, opinions that have been a hundred

times over refuted and buried, are disinterred, displayed, and worshipped by Mr. Klausner. The nose of common sense perceives that these opinions are in the advanced stages of decomposition. Decent Jews will be extremely humiliated to see one of their compatriots publishing such gross errors and will feel a keen sense of regret that they have appeared in this English translation.

Mr. Klausner—and I do not deny his sincerity—yearns for the day when Jews and Christians will unite and collaborate in the establishment of the true religion for the whole world. But the collaboration that he asks of us Christians is the very destruction of our Christianity, *it is the denial of Jesus Christ!* And the “true” religion that he wishes to see established is his own, Judaism *pure and simple!* We, too, are anxious for the collaboration of Jews and Christians, but not in the sense desired by Mr. Klausner. This collaboration of Jews and Christians will some day exist; St. Paul has promised it. He assures us that the Jews will be converted to Christ before the end of time and that this conversion will be the salvation of the world. We yearn for this conversion with all our hearts and all our prayers. Happy the day when all the Jews, and, following them, all the pagans, will adore, as we Christians, the merciful Jew who shed His blood on a cross for the redemption of the human race, Jesus Christ, true God and true Man, the sole genuine Messias, King and Judge of all nations.

DONAT POULET, O.M.I.

E. A. SPEISER, *Introduction to Hurrian* (The Annual of the American Schools of Oriental Research, Vol. XX, 1940-1941, New Haven, Conn.: 1941) Pp. xxx, 230. \$2.50.

Even more recent than the discovery, made during the present generation, of the language, culture, and political importance of Hittites, is the similar discovery, made only during the last decade or two, in regard to the Hurrians, the biblical “Horites.” We now know that this people played an important part in the wide-spread shifting of the ethnic groups in the Near East during the second millenium B.C. In the last few years both linguists and archaeologists have shown that the Hurrians exercised a profound and hitherto unsuspected influence on the culture of the Assyrians, Hittites, and Semitic-speaking peoples of Syria and Palestine, including the Hebrews.

While valuable contributions to the decipherment of the Hurrian language have previously been made by several scholars, this work by Prof. Speiser is the first attempt at a complete description of the phonetic, morphologic, and syntactic structure of this language, done according to sound linguistic principles, in as far as our present, rather inchoate, knowledge of the Hurrian vocabulary permits. This work is entitled an “Introduction” rather than a “Grammar,” because

the author himself candidly admits that later studies may disprove the validity of some of his conclusions. But, in general, the main features of Hurrian grammar are now well established and agreed on all by all competent scholars.

To appreciate rightly even this partial success which has been attained in the study of the Hurrian language, it is necessary to consider the extra-ordinary difficulties that confronted its decipherers:—

(1) The Hurrian documents which have so far been discovered and published not only come from various places and various periods, but are, unfortunately, very meager. The main sources for our knowledge of this language are, in the order of importance: (a) The long letter of Tushratta, ruler of the Hurrian kingdom of Mitanni, to Amenophis III (Amarna period, *ca.* 1400 B.C.); Numerous but rather short passages in Hurrian found among the Hittite documents of Boghasköi (15th-14th century B.C.); (c) Hurrian texts from Mâri on the middle Euphrates (19th-18th century B.C.); (d) Hurrian material from Ras Shamra (*ca.* 1500 B.C.); (e) Hurrian proper names found in various regions from east of the Tigris to the borders of Egypt (middle of 3d to end of 2d millenium B.C.).

(2) The Hurrians invented no script of their own but accommodated for their own use the Sumero-Accadic cuneiform syllabic writing which was often inadequate for the peculiar phonetics of their language; the systems of accommodation differed in some respects from place to place; moreover, most of the Hurrian texts from Ras Shamra are written alphabetic cuneiform which is almost purely consonantal.

(3) Bilingual material, in which Hurrian words are explained by words of some other known language (Sumerian, Accadic, or Hittite) is very limited.

(4) Hurrian is entirely unrelated to any known language; it is probably related to Urartian, the pre-Indo-European language of Armenia, and possibly to one or the other of the modern Caucasian languages; but relatively little is known of these languages themselves.

Despite all these difficulties, Speiser and his fellow-workers in this field, notably Messerschmidt, Thureau-Dangin, Friederich, and Goetze, have achieved marvelous success in analyzing this difficult language and describing its chief characteristics. Hurrian is essentially an agglutinative language. Its root-words, which are almost all monosyllabic, can be enlarged to astonishing length by a complicated system of suffixes. Prefixes are never used. Hurrian, at least as interpreted by Speiser, has no accusative case; a transitive verb when used with a logical object is always constructed in the passive voice.

This valuable philological study arouses one's ardent hopes that new and more extensive texts in Hurrian may soon be discovered and pub-

lished, not only that we may have a clearer and more certain knowledge of this interesting language, but also that we may thereby learn more of this newly found people, who played such an important role in the ethnic "melting-pot" of the ancient Near East.

LOUIS HARTMAN, C.Ss.R.

CYRUS H. GORDON, *The Loves and Wars of Baal and Anat and Other Poems from Ugarit*: translated from the Ugaritic and edited with an introduction (Princeton University Press, 1943). Pp. xvii, 47. \$1.50.

No pleasanter way of gaining a general impression of the literature found at Ugarit could be devised than that which Dr. Gordon offers in this little book. It contains, for reasons which the author explains, no scientific apparatus and no transliteration of the texts themselves. It is a rendering of the best-understood sections of these by the scholar who has treated them most exhaustively, and with admirable success, in other publications. The value of this offering for a wider circle of readers is enhanced by the happy circumstance that the author is not only competent as a philologist, but has developed a genuine affection for his material, considered as literature. The appreciation of it which the reader receives is therefore no less than the original deserves; like most early Semitic texts, these poems from 1400 B.C. present features of composition which stand up well in translation. Despite the pronounced diversity of subject-matter, there are interesting stylistic similarities with the poetry of the Old Testament: on the whole it may be said that the Ugaritic texts are slower-moving and more rigidly formal in structure than the poetry of the Hebrew sacred writers. This in itself is surprising, when we bear in mind the "primitive" character so cheerfully and unhesitatingly ascribed by many to the Canticle of Debbara. However backward we choose to make the Hebrews in the period before David, we can no longer suppose that they lacked well-elaborated models on which to pattern their earliest literary efforts. True, the Ugaritic texts are epic in character; but the passage from epic to lyric style can never have been easier anywhere in the world than in the case of these west-Semitic tongues.

The introduction to these texts is in its own way a model for succinctness, precision, informative detail, and withal for simplicity and general appeal it would be hard to match. The rendering is not absolutely rigid. In one or two places the reader will encounter startlingly modern touches (p. xiii, "mixed drinks," for "mixture," p. 21; p. 26, "Thor—a transliteration—as epithet for the god Baal, elsewhere "Bull," and undoubtedly a sheer coincidence with the name of the Scandinavian thunder-god). These, it is clear, the author introduces for the bizzarre effect they provide. The publishers have graced this volume with a format and cover-design sufficient to make even the most casual of readers want one for his own.

PATRICK W. SKEHAN.

PHILIP BIRNBAUM, PH.D., *The Arabic Commentary of Yefet ben 'Ali the Karaite on the Book of Hosea*: edited from eight manuscripts and provided with critical notes and an introduction (Philadelphia: The Dropsie College, 1942). Pp. lxii, 247; 2 facsimiles.

Dr. Birnbaum has produced an exemplary and interesting dissertation in a difficult field. To the author of this commentary on Osee, a Karaite active in the second half of the tenth century, he ascribes a prominent place in the chain of medieval Jewish exegesis. Previous editors have given us the same author's comments on Nahum, Canticles, and Daniel, besides excerpts on Ruth, Psalms, etc. Having drawn on Targum, Midrach, Talmud, and Saadiah (the two later despite his anti-Rabbanite polemics) among other sources, under the influence of the Islamic Mu'tazilite system, Yefet influenced in his turn both Abraham Ibn Ezra and David Kihî, as well as a wider circle of less well known compilers and glossators in Hebrew.

The critical introduction to the text has appeared recently as a series of articles in the *Jewish Quarterly Review*, vol. 32. Characteristics of Yefet's exegetical method and of his manner of translating are presented; his evidence for the state of Hebrew grammatical studies in his day is sifted, and the dialectical variations of his own writing style from classical Arabic are indicated. Parallel selections illustrate his use of sources and his influence on later writers. One of the happy results of this study has been the discovery that an Arabic translation of the Later Prophets, contained in Bodleian Ms. Huntington 206, with colophons from the year A.D. 1195, which has at times been brought into the vexed question of Saadiah's activity as a translator, is in fact an abridgment of Yefet's commentary. It is by discoveries of this kind that the true provenance and date of the extant medieval Arabic renderings of the Old Testament may finally be cleared up: it does not seem excluded, for example, that Yefet may have had at his disposal a pre-existing Arabic translation for some or all of the books on which he comments (cfr. p. viii, fn. 7).

The manuscripts collated for the edition include five in England, one in Cairo and two in Leningrad; the two latter were studied from photostats, of which one facsimile is given with the edition, for each Ms. The others were collated where they are preserved, and edited from the resulting copies. The text (1-232) is provided with full identification of sources and parallel places in other Jewish writings. Abulwalid ibn Jannah's grammatical works are given by the Arabic title only, without the author's name; which presumes a good deal in the reader. The variant readings form fifteen pages of appendix (233-47). The work is apparently lithoprinted, from an excellently prepared master copy.

PATRICK W. SKEHAN.

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